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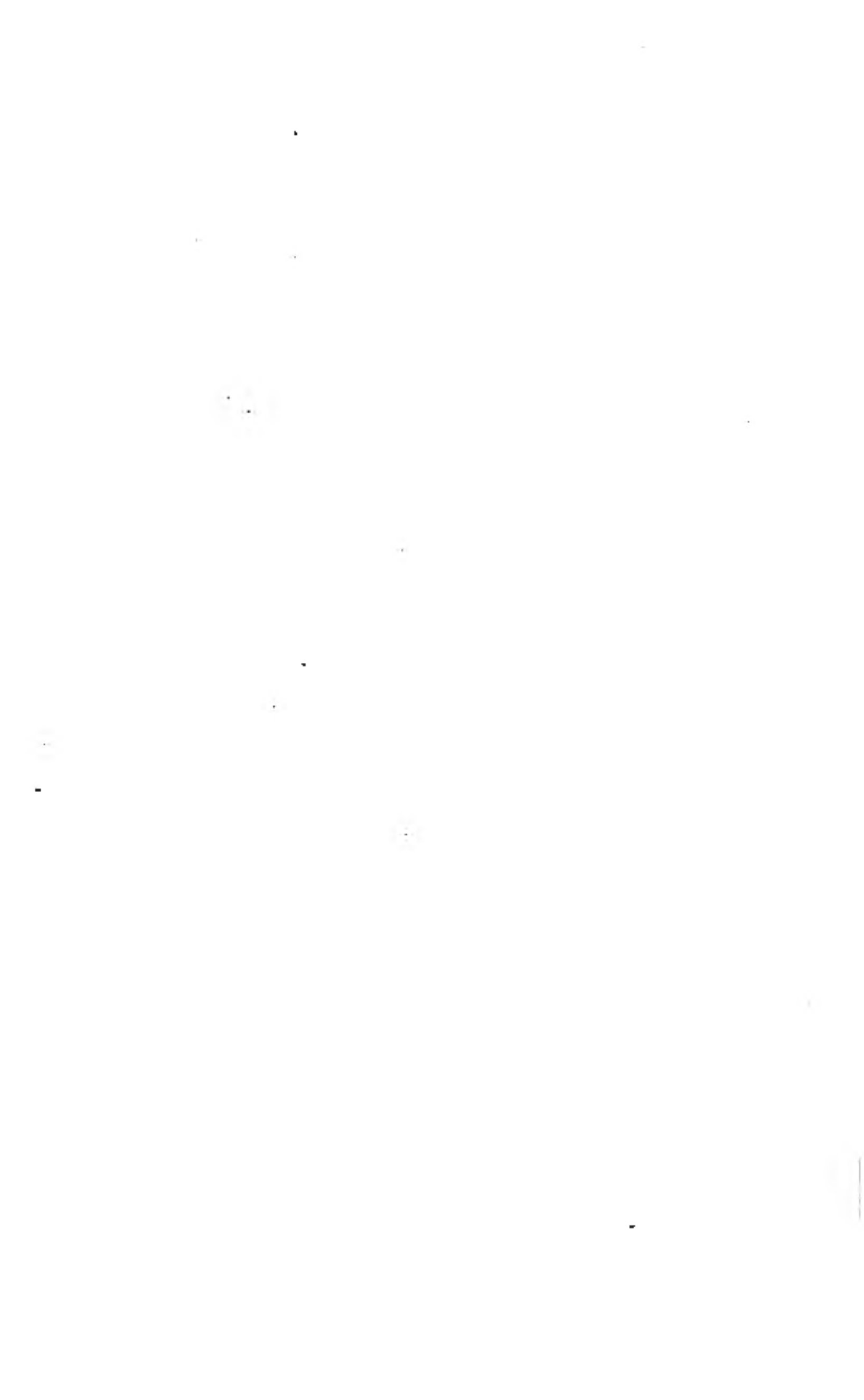
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THE
PLAYS AND POEMS
OF
SHAKESPEARE.

VOL. XIV.



THE
PLAYS AND POEMS
OF
SHAKESPEARE.

WITH
ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY ILLUSTRATIONS,

FROM DESIGNS BY EMINENT ARTISTS.

EDITED BY
A. J. VALPY, A.M.,
FELLOW OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD.

IN FIFTEEN VOLUMES.

VOL. XIV.

LONDON:
BELL & DALDY, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
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YRABU. QNOYMA78

Shakspeare pleases by his animated and masterly representations of character, by the liveliness of his descriptions, the force of his sentiments, and his possessing, beyond all writers, the natural language of passion:—beauties, which true criticism no less teaches us to place in the highest rank, than nature teaches us to feel.

DR. BLAIR.

Shakspeare was the first who painted moral affliction in the highest degree: the bitterness of those sufferings, of which he gives us the idea, might pass for the phantoms of imagination, if Nature did not recognize her own picture in them.

MADAME DE STAEL HOLSTEIN.

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**HAMLET,
PRINCE OF DENMARK.**

HISTORICAL NOTICE

OF

HAMLET.

The French novelist Belleforest extracted from Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish historian, the history of Amleth, and inserted it in the collection of novels published by him in the latter part of the sixteenth century; whence it was translated into English under the title of 'The Historie of Hamblett,' a small quarto volume printed in black letter, which formed the subject of a play previous to 1589: and on these materials our author is supposed to have constructed this noble tragedy, the composition of which is assigned by Malone to the date of 1600, while Mr. Chalmers and Dr. Drake contend that it was written as early as 1597, on the authority of Dr. Percy's copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer, which once belonged to Gabriel Harvey, who had written his name at both the commencement and conclusion, with several notes between; among which was the following:—'The younger sort take much delight in Shakspeare's Venus and Adonis; but his Lucrece, and his tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, have it in them to please the wiser sort. 1598.' The original composition of this play may therefore be placed in 1597; and its revision, with additions, in 1600. The earliest entry of it at Stationers' Hall is July 26th, 1602; and a copy of the

play in its imperfect state, dated 1603, and supposed to have been printed from a spurious original, was first discovered in the beginning of 1825. Another edition appeared in 1604, 'newly imprinted, and enlarged to almost as much again as it was;' the variations in which are both numerous and striking.

No character in our author's plays has occasioned so much discussion, so much contradictory opinion, and, consequently, so much perplexity as that of Hamlet, the inconsistencies of whose conduct have perhaps received the most satisfactory solution from the immortal Goethe. 'It is clear to me,' observes this great writer, 'that Shakspeare's intention was to exhibit the effects of a great action imposed as a duty on a mind too feeble for its accomplishment. In this sense I find the character consistent throughout. Here is an oak tree planted in a china vase, proper only to receive the most delicate flowers: the roots strike out, and the vessel flies to pieces. A pure, noble, highly moral disposition, but without that energy of soul which constitutes the hero, sinks under a load, which it can neither support, nor resolve to abandon altogether. All his obligations are sacred to him, but this alone is above his powers. An impossibility is required at his hands; not an impossibility in itself, but that which is so to him. Observe how he turns, shifts, hesitates, advances, and recedes; how he is continually reminded and reminding himself of his great commission, which he, nevertheless, in the end, seems almost intirely to lose sight of, and this without ever recovering his former tranquillity.'

The scene of this tragedy is at the castle and court

of Elsinore, and the action apparently occupies some months. The story is intirely fabulous, and is placed at an uncertain period of antiquity ; but perhaps it may be safely referred to the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century, during the invasions of England by the Danes.

‘ If the dramas of Shakspeare,’ says Dr. Johnson, ‘ were to be characterised each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of Hamlet the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale. The scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity ; with merriment that includes judicious and instructive observations ; and solemnity not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. New characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth, the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that in the first act chills the blood with horror, to the top in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.

‘ The conduct is perhaps not wholly secure against objections. The action is indeed for the most part in continual progression, but there are some scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate cause, for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the mad-

man most, when he treats Ophelia with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

‘Hamlet is, through the whole piece, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has, by the stratagem of the play, convicted the king, he makes no attempt to punish him; and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet had no part in producing.

‘The catastrophe is not very happily produced; the exchange of weapons is rather an expedient of necessity than a stroke of art. A scheme might easily be formed to kill Hamlet with the dagger, and Laertes with the bowl.

‘The poet is accused of having shown little regard to poetical justice, and may be charged with equal neglect of poetical probability. The apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge which he demands is not obtained, but by the death of him that was required to take it; and the gratification which would arise from the destruction of a usurper and a murderer, is abated by the untimely death of Ophelia, the young, the beautiful, the harmless, and the pious.’

A R G U M E N T.

The sudden death of Hamlet king of Denmark, and the hurried and indecent nuptials of his widow with his brother and successor, fill the mind of the young prince Hamlet with grief and shame, which is speedily exchanged into a desire of revenge at the appearance of his father's spirit, which informs the astonished youth that his end has been effected by the operation of poison, administered to him in his sleep by his perfidious brother. Doubtful of the truth of this supernatural communication, Hamlet counterfeits madness in order to conceal his designs, and invites the king and his court to witness the performance of a play which bears a striking similarity to the murder detailed by the Ghost. Struck by the reproaches of a wounded conscience, the guilty monarch betrays the emotions of his mind to the vigilance of Hamlet, who is prevented from the prosecution of his revenge by the death of Polonius, the father of Ophelia, who is commissioned by the king to lie in ambush during an interview between the prince and his mother: Hamlet, hearing a noise, and conjecturing that it proceeds from his concealed uncle, stabs the old man to the heart;—a mistake, which deprives Ophelia of reason, and causes her self-destruction; while the unfortunate prince is banished to England by the king, who sends thither secret orders for his death on his arrival. The accomplishment of this cruel mandate is prevented by his captivity by pirates, who land him on the Danish coast. In the mean time, Laertes, the son of Polonius, in his anxiety to revenge the deaths of his father and sister, tarnishes the natural generosity of his character by listening to the insidious suggestions of the king, who accomplishes the destruction of his nephew by means of a poisoned weapon, with which he is wounded in a trial of skill in fencing with Laertes, to which the unsuspecting youth is invited; and in which his antagonist also becomes the victim of his own fraud. Finding his end fast approaching, Hamlet inflicts on his uncle the just punishment of his atrocities; and soon after expires, after witnessing the untimely death of his mother by poison.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CLAUDIUS, king of Denmark.
HAMLET, son to the former, and nephew to the present king.
POLONIUS, lord chamberlain.
HORATIO, friend to Hamlet.
LAERTES, son to Polonius.
VOLTIMAND, }
CORNELIUS, } courtiers.
ROSENCRANTZ, }
GUILDENSTERN, }
OSRIC, a courtier.
ANOTHER COURTIER.
A PRIEST.
MARCELLUS, }
BERNARDO, } officers.
FRANCISCO, a soldier.
REYNALDO, servant to Polonius.
CAPTAIN. AMBASSADOR.
GHOST of HAMLET'S FATHER.
FORTINBRAS, prince of Norway.

GERTRUDE, queen of Denmark, and mother of Hamlet.
OPHELIA, daughter of Polonius.

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Gravediggers,
Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants.

SCENE, Elsinore.

H A M L E T,
PRINCE OF DENMARK.

A C T I.

SCENE I.

Elsinore. A platform before the castle.

FRANCISCO *on his post.* Enter to him BERNARDO.

Ber. Who 's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold
Yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed,
Francisco.

Fran. For this relief, much thanks: 'tis bitter
cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,

The rivals¹ of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Fran. I think, I hear them.—Stand, ho ! Who is there ?

Ho. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier :
Who hath relieved you ?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit Francisco.*

Mar. Holla ! Bernardo !

Ber. Say,
What, is Horatio there ?

Ho. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio ; welcome, good Marcellus.

Ho. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night ?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us :
Therefore I have entreated him along,
With us to watch the minutes of this night ;
That, if again this apparition come,

¹ Partners.

He may approve our eyes,¹ and speak to it.

Ho. Tush! tush! 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile;

And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen.

Ho. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,
When yon same star, that's westward from the
pole,
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,
The bell then beating one,——

Mar. Peace; break thee off; look, where it
comes again!

Enter GHOST.

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's
dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Ho. Most like:—it harrows me with fear and
wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Speak to it, Horatio.

Ho. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of
night,

¹ Have proof that we were no way mistaken.

Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven, I charge thee,
 speak.

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See, it stalks away.

Ho. Stay; speak; speak, I charge thee; speak.

[Exit Ghost.]

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble and look
 pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you of it?

Ho. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Ho. As thou art to thyself:
Such was the very armour he had on,
When he the ambitious Norway combated:
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks¹ on the ice.
'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump² at this dead
 hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Ho. In what particular thought to work, I know
 not;

¹ Sledged Polanders.

² Jump.

But, in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
'This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that
knows,

Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land ;
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war ;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week :
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-laborer with the day :
Who is 't, that can inform me ?

Ho. That can I ;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dared to the combat ; in which, our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him)
Did slay this Fortinbras ; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands,
Which he stood seised of, to the conqueror ;
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king, which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher ; as, by the same compact,¹

¹ Joint bargain.

And carriage of the article design'd,¹
 His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
 Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
 Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
 Shark'd up a list of landless resolute,
 For food and diet, to some enterprise
 That hath a stomach² in 't; which is no other
 (As it doth well appear unto our state)
 But to recover of us, by strong hand
 And terms compulsatory, those foresaid lands
 So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
 Is the main motive of our preparations;
 'The source of this our watch; and the chief head
 Of this post-haste and romage³ in the land.

Ber. I think it be no other, but even so:
 Well may it sort,⁴ that this portentous figure
 Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
 That was, and is the question⁵ of these wars.

Ho. A mote it is, to trouble the mind's eye.
 In the most high and palmy⁶ state of Rome,
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
 The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.⁷

.

As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,

¹ i. e. import of the articles drawn up between them.

² Resolution.

³ Romage here signifies inquiry into the means of defence

⁴ Suit.

⁵ The theme or subject.

⁶ Victorious.

⁷ An intermediate verse is here evidently lost.

Disasters in the sun ; and the moist star,¹
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.
And even the like precurse of fierce events,—
As harbingers preceding still the fates,
And prologue to the omen² coming on,—
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Into our climatures and countrymen.—

Re-enter GHOST.

But, soft ; behold ! lo, where it comes again !
I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion !
If thou hast any sound or use of voice,
Speak to me :
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me :
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak !
Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[cock crows.
Speak of it :—stay, and speak.—Stop it, Marcellus.
Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan ?³
Ho. Do, if it will not stand.

¹ i. e. the moon.

² Portentous event.

³ A partisan is a kind of pike.

Ber.

"Tis here!

Ho.

"Tis here!

Mar. 'Tis gone![*Exit Ghost*]

We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak when the cock crew

Ho. And then it started, like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
'The extravagant and erring¹ spirit hies
To his confine; and of the truth herein
'This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes,² nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Ho. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill:

¹ Wandering.

² Strikes with diseases.

Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning
know
Where we shall find him most convenient.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The same. A room of state in the same.

Enter KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES,
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, *Lords, and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet, our dear brother's
death,
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole king-
dom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;—
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
'That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defecated joy,—
With one auspicious and one dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,

In equal scale weighing delight and dole,¹—
Taken to wife : nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along.—For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,—
Holding a weak supposal of our worth ;
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame ;
Colleagued with this dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bands ² of law,
To our most valiant brother :—so much for him
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.
Thus much the business is : we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, impotent and bedrid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His farther gait ³ herein ; in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject : and we here despatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway
Giving to you no farther personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope
Of these dilated [•] articles allow.
Farewell ; and let your haste commend your duty.

¹ Sorrow.

² Bonds.

³ Proceeding.

Cor. Vol. In that and all things will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing; heartily farewell.

[Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is 't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice. What wouldst thou beg
Laertes,

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread lord,
Your leave and favor to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation;
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says
Polonius?

Po. He hath my lord, wrung from me my slow
leave
By laborsome petition; and, at last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent.
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be
thine,
And thy best graces: spend it at thy will.—

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than kind.

[*aside.*

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted color off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not, for ever, with thy vailed lids,¹

Seek for thy noble father in the dust.

'Thou know'st, 'tis common; all that live must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not seems.

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected havior of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly: these, indeed, seem.
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within, which passeth show;
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe.

¹ Dejected eyes.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father :
But, you must know, your father lost a father ;
'That father lost, lost his ; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow : but to persevere
In obstinate condolement, is a course
Of impious stubbornness ; 'tis unmanly grief :
It shows a will most incorrect to Heaven ;
A heart unfortified, or mind impatient ;
An understanding simple and unschool'd :
For what we know must be, and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
Take it to heart ? Fie ! 'tis a fault to Heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd, whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse, till he that died to-day,
' This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing¹ woe, and think of us
As of a father ; for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne ;
And, with no less nobility of love,
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,

¹ For unavailing.

It is most retrograde to our desire :

- And, we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
Hamlet :

I pray thee, stay with us ; go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply :
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come ;
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart ; in grace whereof,
No jocund health, that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell ;
And the king's rouse¹ the heaven shall bruit²
again,

Respeaking earthly thunder.—Come away.

[*Exeunt King, Queen, Lords, &c. Polonius, and
Laertes.*]

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve³ itself into a dew ;
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon⁴ 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! O God !
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world !
Fie on 't ! O, fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed ; things rank, and gross in
nature,

¹ Jovial draught.

³ Dissolve.

² Report.

⁴ Law.

Possess it merely.¹ That it should come to this!
But two months dead!—nay, not so much, not
two:

So excellent a king, that was, to this,
Hyperion² to a satyr; so loving to my mother,
That he might not beteeme³ the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month,—
Let me not think on't:—Frailty, thy name is
woman!

A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears;—why she, even she,—
(O heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer) married with my
uncle,

My father's brother; but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules. Within a month;
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married.—O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to good;
But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue!

¹ Intirely.

² Apollo.

³ Suffer.

In dreadful secrecy impart they did ;
And I with them, the third night, kept the watch ;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and
good,

The apparition comes. I knew your father ;
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this ?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we
watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it ?

Ho. My lord, I did,
But answer made it none : yet once, methought,
It lifted up its head, and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak :
But, even then, the morning cock crew loud ;
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Ho. As I do live, my honor'd lord, 'tis true .
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night ?

All. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you ?

All. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe ?

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not
His face ?

Ho. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver¹ up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

Ho. A countenance more

In sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Ho. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Ho. Most constantly.

Ham. I would, I had been there.

Ho. It would have much amazed you.

Ham. Very like,

Very like: stay'd it long?

Ho. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar. Ber. Longer, longer.

Ho. Not when I saw it.

Ham. His beard was grizzled? no?

Ho. It was, as I have seen it in his life,

A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night;

Perchance, 'twill walk again.

Ho. I warrant you, it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,

I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,

And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,

If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,

Let it be tenable in your silence still;

¹ That part of the helmet which protects the lower part of the face, and may be lifted up.

And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue;
I will requite your loves: so, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honor.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

[Exeunt Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo.]
My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would, the night were
come!

Till then, sit still, my soul! Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's
eyes. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.

A room in Polonius's house.

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessities are embark'd; farewell.
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favor,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent; sweet, not lasting;
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer.

Think it no more;

For nature, crescent,¹ does not grow alone
In thews² and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
'The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now;
And now no soil nor cautel³ doth besmirch⁴
The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
'The safety and the health of the whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
Unto the voice and yielding of that body,
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says, he loves
you,

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no farther,
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
'Then weigh what loss your honor may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure open
'To his unmaster'd⁵ importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia; fear it, my dear sister;
And keep you in the rear of your affection,

¹ Increasing.

² Muscular strength

³ Subtlety, deceit.

⁴ Discolor.

⁵ Licentious.

Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest¹ maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon :
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes :
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclosed ;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then : best safety lies in fear :
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep
As watchman to my heart : but, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven ;
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own read.²

Laer. O, fear me not.
I stay too long ; but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace ;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Po. Yet here, Laertes ! aboard, aboard, for
shame :
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There ; my blessing with
you ; *[laying his hand on Laertes's head.*

¹ Most cautious.

² Heeds not his own lessons.

And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou character.¹ Give thy thoughts no
tongue,

Nor any unproportion'd thought his act :
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar :
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel ;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade : beware
Of entrance to a quarrel ; but, being in,
Bear it, that the opposed may beware of thee :
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice :
'Take each man's censure,² but reserve thy judgment :

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy ; rich, not gaudy ;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man ;
And they in France, of the best rank and station.
Are of a most select and generous chief,³ in that :
Neither a borrower nor a lender be ;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend ;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all ;—to thine own self be true ;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell ; my blessing season this in thee !

Luer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my
lord.

¹ Inscribe

² Opinion.

³ Note, estimation.

Po. The time invites you: go; your servants
tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. *[Exit Laertes.]*

Po. What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the lord
Hamlet.

Po. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:
If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honor.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many
tenders
Of his affection to me.

Po. Affection? puh! you speak like a green
girl,
Unsifted¹ in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should
think.

¹ Inexperienced.

Po. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a
baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more
dearly;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wronging it thus) you'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My lord, he hath importuned me with love
In honorable fashion.

Po. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech,
my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Po. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do
know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter.
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a making,—
You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence:
Set your entreatments¹ at a higher rate,
Than a command to parley. For lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him; that he is young;
And with a larger tether may he walk,
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers
Not of that die which their investments show,

¹ Company, conversation.

But mere implorators¹ of unholy suits,
 Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,
 The better to beguile. This is for all ;—
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
 As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.
 Look to 't, I charge you ; come your ways.

Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV.

The platform.

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly ; it is very cold.

Ho. It is a nipping and an eager² air.

Ham. What hour now ?

Ho. I think, it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Ho. Indeed ? I heard it not : it then draws near
 the season,

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*a flourish of trumpets and ordnance shot off within.*

What does this mean, my lord ?

Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes
 his rouse,³

Keeps wassel,⁴ and the swaggering up-spring⁵
 reels ;

¹ Implorers.

² Keen.

³ Jovial draught.

⁴ A convivial entertainment.

⁵ A dance.

And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

Ho. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is 't:
But to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honor'd in the breach than the observance.
This heavy-headed-revel, east and west,
Makes us traduced, and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe¹ us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth; (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin)
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,²
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or by some habit, that too much o'erleavens
The form of plausible manners;—that these men,—
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect;
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star;—
Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo)
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: the dram of eale

¹ Call.

² Humor.

Doth all the noble substance of a doubt,
To his own scandal.¹

Enter ghost.

Ho. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!--
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee; I'll call thee, Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me:
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell,
why thy canonised bones, hearsed in death,

To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground.
But do not go with it.

Ho. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak ; then I will follow it.

Ho. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear ?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee ;¹
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself ?—
It waves me forth again : I 'll follow it.

Ho. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my
lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles² o'er his base into the sea ;
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,
And draw you into madness ? think of it.
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain,
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still.
Go on ; I 'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Ho. Be ruled ; you shall not go.

¹ Value.

² Hangs.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.—

[*Ghost beckons.*
Still am I call'd :—unhand me, gentlemen :—

[*breaking from them.*
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets
me :—

I say, away.—Go on ; I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*

Ho. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow : 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Ho. Have after. To what issue will this come ?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Ho. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

A more remote part of the platform.

Re-enter GHOST and HAMLET.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me ? speak : I'll
go no farther.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,

¹ Hinders.

Front of

1. /

2. 1



Seating or

HAWLEY.
Charles Herman & Sons
461 Broadway

When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not; but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak; I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt
hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night;
And, for the day, confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young
blood;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their
spheres;
Thy knotted and combined locks to part;
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine:
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood.—List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love,—

Ham. O heaven!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural
murder.

Ham. Murder?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;

But this most foul, strange, and unnatural..

Ham. Haste me to know it; that I, with wings
as swift

As meditation, or the thoughts of love,

May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;

And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed

'That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,

Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet,
hear :

'Tis given out, that sleeping in mine orchard,

A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark

Is by a forged process of my death

Rankly abused: but know, thou noble youth,

The serpent, that did sting thy father's life,

Now wears his crown.

Ham. O, my prophetic soul! my uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,

(O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power

So to seduce!) won to his shameful lust

The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.

O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!

From me, whose love was of that dignity,

That it went hand in hand even with the vow

I made to her in marriage; and to decline

Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor

To those of mine!

But virtue, as it never will be moved,

'Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven;

So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,

Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.
But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air:
Brief let me be.—Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon¹ in a vial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body;
And, with a sudden vigor, it doth posset
And curd, like eager² droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter³ bark'd about,
Most lazar-like,⁴ with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen at once despatch'd;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd,⁵ disappointed,⁶ unaneled;⁷
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;

¹ Henbane.² Sour, acid.³ Scurf.⁴ Most like a leper.⁵ Without having received the sacrament.⁶ Unappointed, unprepared. ⁷ Without extreme unction.

Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught; leave her to Heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
'To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire.

Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me. [*Exit.*

Ham. O, all you host of heaven! O, earth!
What else?

And shall I couple hell?—O, fie!—Hold, hold, my
heart;

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee?
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe.¹—Remember thee?
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws² of books, all forms, all pressures past,
'That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven.
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables:³—meet it is, I set it down,

¹ Head.

² Sayings, sentences.

³ Memorandums.

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark.

[*writing*]

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is, 'Adieu, adieu! remember me.'
I have sworn 't.

Ho. [*within.*] My lord, my lord,——

Mar. [*within.*] Lord Hamlet,——

Ho. [*within.*] Heaven secure him!

Ham. So be it!

Mar. [*within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is 't, my noble lord?

Ho. What news, my lord?

Ham. O, wonderful!

Ho. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No;

You will reveal it.

Ho. Not I, my lord, by heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you then? Would heart of man
once think it?

But you 'll be secret?

Ho. Mar. Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all
Denmark,

But he's an arrant knave.

Ho. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from
the grave,

To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right ; you are in the right ;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part :
You, as your business and desire shall point you ;—
For every man hath business and desire,
Such as it is ;—and, for my own poor part,
Look you, I will go pray.

Ho. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily ; yes, Faith, heartily.

Ho. There 's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision
here,—

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you :
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster it as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Ho. What is 't, my lord ? we will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen
to-night.

Ho. Mar. My lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear 't.

Ho. In faith,
My lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny?

Come on;—you hear this fellow in the cellarage.
Consent to swear.

Ho. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. *Hic et ubique?*¹ then we'll shift our ground.—

Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Swear by my sword,
Never to speak of this that you have heard.

Ghost. [*beneath.*] Swear by his sword.

Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so fast?

A worthy pioneer!—Once more remove, good friends.

Ho. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come;—

¹ Here and every where?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Po. 'And, in part, him;—but,' you may say,—
'not well:

But, if 't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so:—and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonor him; take heed of that:
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Po. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrel-
ing,

Drabbing:—you may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonor him.

Po. Faith, no; as you may season it in the
charge.

You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so
quaintly,

That they may seem the taints of liberty;
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind;
A savageness¹ in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.*

Rey. But, my good lord,——

Po. Wherefore should you do this?

¹ For wildness.

* Such as youth in general is liable to.

Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Po. Marry, sir, here's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working,
Mark you;
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen, in the prenominate¹ crimes,
The youth you breathe of, guilty, be assured,
He closes with you in this consequence;—
' Good sir,' or so; or ' friend,' or ' gentleman,'—
According to the phrase or the addition
Of man and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Po. And then, sir, does he this;—he does—
What was I about to say?—By the mass, I was
about to say something:—where did I leave?

Rey. At, closes in the consequence.

Po. At, closes in the consequence:—Ay, marry;
He closes with you thus:—' I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday, or t' other day,
Or then, or then, with such, or such; and, as you
say,

There was he gaming; there o'ertook in his rouse;
There falling out at tennis; or, perchance,
I saw him enter such a house of sale,
(Videlicet, a brothel) or so forth.'—

¹ Already named.

See you now ;
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth :
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlaces, and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out :
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not ?

Rey. My lord, I have.

Po. God be wi' you ; fare you well.

Rey. Good my lord,——

Po. Observe his inclination in yourself.¹

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Po. And let him ply his music.

Rey. Well, my lord.

[*Exit.*

Enter OPHELIA.

Po. Farewell !—How now, Ophelia ? what's the matter ?

Oph. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted !

Po. With what, in the name of heaven ?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbraced ;
No hat upon his head ; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved² to his ankle ;
Pale as his shirt ; his knees knocking each other ;

¹ In your own person, not by spies.

² Hanging down like fetters

And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of hell,
To speak of horrors ;—he comes before me.

Po. Mad for thy love ?

Oph. My lord, I do not know .
But, truly, I do fear it.

Po. What said he ?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me
hard ;

Then goes he to the length of all his arm ;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so ;
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
And end his being : that done, he lets me go .
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes ;
For out o' doors he went without their help,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Po. Come, go with me ; I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love ;
Whose violent property foredoes ¹ itself,
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
As oft as any passion under heaven,
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.—

¹ Destroys.

~~What~~ Have you given him any hard words of late?

~~Pol.~~ No, my good lord; but, as you did command,

I did repel his letters, and denied
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry, that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted¹ him: I fear'd, he did but trifle.
And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my
jealousy!

It seems, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
This must be known; which, being kept close,
might move
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.
Come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A room in the castle.

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,
and Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guilden-
stern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke

¹ Observed.

Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation ; so I call it,
Since not the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put
him

So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of : I entreat you both,
That,—being of so young days brought up with
him,

And since so neighbor'd to his youth and humor ;—
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time : so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures ; and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of
you ;

And, sure I am, two men there are not living,
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry ¹ and good will,
As to expend your time with us awhile
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ro. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,

¹ Complaisance.

Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guilden-
stern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosen-
crantz :

And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son.—Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence and our prac-
tices
Pleasant and helpful to him !

Queen. Ay, amen !

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some
Attendants.*]

Enter POLONIUS.

Po. The ambassadors from Norway, my good
lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good
news.

I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God and to my gracious king;
And I do think, (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail¹ of policy so sure
As it hath used to do) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Po. Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them
in. *[Exit Polonius.]*

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt, it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

King. Well, we shall sift him.—Welcome, my
good friends!

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Vol. Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;²
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness; whereat grieved,
That so his sickness, age, and impotence
Was falsely borne in hand,³—sends out arrests

¹ Scent.

² Poland.

³ Imposed on.

On Fortinbras, which he, in brief, obeys ;
Receives rebuke from Norway ; and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give the assay of arms against your majesty :
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee :
And his commission, to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack ;
With an entreaty, herein farther shown,
[*gives a paper.*

That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety and allowance
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well ;
And, at our more consider'd time, we 'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business :
Meantime, we thank you for your well-took labor.
Go to your rest ; at night we 'll feast together.
Most welcome home !

[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

Po. This business is well ended.
My liege, and madam, to expostulate ¹
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time :
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes, —

¹ Discussa

I will be brief. Your noble son is mad :
Mad call I it ; for, to define true madness,
What is 't, but to be nothing else but mad ?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Po. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true : 'tis true, 'tis pity ;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true : a foolish figure ;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then ; and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect ;
Or, rather say, the cause of this defect ;
For this effect, defective, comes by cause.
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus :
Perpend.

I have a daughter ; have, while she is mine ;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this : now gather, and surmise.—
' To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most
beautified Ophelia : '——
That 's an ill phrase, a vile phrase ; ' beautified ' is
a vile phrase ; but you shall hear.—Thus :—
' In her excellent white bosom, these,' &c.

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her ?

Po. Good madam, stay awhile ; I will be faithful.—

' Doubt thou, the stars are fire ; [*reads.*
Doubt, that the sun doth move ;
Doubt truth to be a liar ;
But never doubt, I love.

O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers ; I have not art to reckon my groans ; but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.

‘ Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him. HAMLET.’

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me ;
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Received his love ?

Po. What do you think of me ?

King. As of a man faithful and honorable.

Po. I would fain prove so : but what might you think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceived it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me) what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk, or table-book ;
Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb ;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight ;
What might you think ? no, I went round¹ to
work,

And my young mistress thus did I bespeak :—
‘ Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy sphere :
This must not be : ’ and then I prescripts gave her,

¹ Roundly, without reserve.

That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed, (a short tale to make)
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;
'Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;
'Thence to a lightness; and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think, 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Po. Hath there been such a time, (I'd fain know
that)

That I have positively said, ' 'Tis so,'
When it proved otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Po. Take this from this, if this be otherwise:

[pointing to his head and shoulder.]

If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it farther?

Po. You know, sometimes he walks four hours
together
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Po. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to
him:

Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter: if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,

Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.

King.

We will try it.

Enter HAMLET, reading.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch
comes reading.

Po. Away, I do beseech you ; both away ;
I 'll board him presently :—O, give me leave.—

[Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.]

How does my good lord Hamlet ?

Ham. Well, god-'a-mercy.

Po. Do you know me, my lord ?

Ham. Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

Po. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Po. Honest, my lord ?

Ham. Ay, sir ; to be honest, as this world goes,
is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Po. That 's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead
dog, being a god, kissing carrion,——Have you a
daughter ?

Po. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun : conception ¹ is
a blessing ; but as your daughter may conceive,——
friend, look to 't.

Po. [*aside.*] How say you by that ? Still harping

¹ Understanding.

on my daughter: yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone; and, truly, in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Po. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Po. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here, that old men have gray beards; that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber, and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Po. Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't. [*aside.*] Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave?

Po. Indeed, that is out o' the air.—How pregnant¹ sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive² the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My h—

¹ Ready, apt.

norable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

Po. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Po. You go to seek the lord Hamlet: there he is.

Ro. God save you, sir! *[to Polonius.*

[Exit Polonius.

Guil. My honored lord!——

Ro. My most dear lord!——

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! good lads, how do ye both?

Ro. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not overhappy:
On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ro. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favors?

Guil. Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true: she is a strumpet. What news?

Ro. None, my lord; but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near: but your news is

not true. Let me question more in particular. What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord?

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ro. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one, in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of the worst.

Ro. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Ro. Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ro. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars, bodies; and our monarchs, and outstretched heroes, the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ro. Guil. We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with

the rest of my servants ; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore ?

Ro. To visit you, my lord ; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks ; but I thank you : and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny. Were you not sent for ? Is it your own inclining ? Is it a free visitation ? Come, come, deal justly with me : come, come ; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord ?

Ham. Any thing—but to the purpose. You were sent for ; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to color. I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ro. To what end, my lord ?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no ?

Ro. What say you ? *[to Guildenstern.]*

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you : *[aside.]*—if you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why ; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of

late (but wherefore I know not) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises: and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a steril promontory: this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire;—why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! and yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me,—no, nor woman neither, though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

Ro. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, 'Man delights not me?'

Ro. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten¹ entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted² them on the way; and hither are they coming to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me: the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall

¹ Spare.

² Overtook.

end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o' the sere;¹ and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for 't.—What players are they?

Ro. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it, they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ro. I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ro. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ro. Nay, their endeavor keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, sir, an eyry² of children, little eyases,³ that cry out on the top of question,⁴ and are most tyrannically clapped for 't: these are now the fashion; and so berattle the common stages, (so they call them) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? Who maintains them? how are they escoted?⁵ Will they pursue the quality⁶ no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow them-

¹ i. e. shall make even those laugh, whose lungs are almost withered.

² Nest.

³ Unfledged hawks.

⁴ i. e. who perpetually declaim in the highest notes of the voice.

⁵ Paid.

⁶ Profession.

selves to common players, (as it is most like, if their means are no better) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ro. Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre¹ them on to controversy: there was, for awhile, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is it possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ro. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.²

Ham. It is not very strange: for my uncle is king of Denmark; and those, that would make mouths at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats apiece, for his picture in little. Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*florish of trumpets within.*]

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with

¹ Provoke.

² i. e. not only the world, but the world-bearer too: in allusion to the story of Hercules relieving Atlas.

³ Compliment.

your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring.¹ Masters, you are all welcome. We'll ev'n to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: we'll have a speech straight: come, give us a taste of your quality;² come, a passionate speech.

1 *Play*. What speech, my lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once: for the play, I remember, pleased not the million: 'twas caviare³ to the general:⁴ but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments, in such matters, cried in the top of mine⁵) an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no sallets in the lines, to make the matter savory; nor no matter in the phrase, that might indite the author of affection:⁶ but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas *Æneas'* tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: if it live in your memory, begin at this line; let me see, let me see;—

¹ This is said to a young player who acted the parts of women.

² Profession.

³ An Italian dish made of the roes of fishes.

⁴ Multitude.

⁵ i. e. were higher than my own.

⁶ i. e. convict the author of being a fantastical, affected writer.

‘The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast;’
——’tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.

‘The rugged Pyrrhus;—he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble,
When he lay couched in the ominous horse;
Hath now this dread and black complexion
smear’d

With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules;¹ horridly trick’d²
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons;
Baked and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and a damned light
To their lord’s murder: roasted in wrath and fire.
And thus o’ersized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks.’—So proceed you.

Po. ‘Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with good
accent, and good discretion.

1 Play. ‘Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: unequal match’d,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top

¹ Red; a term in heraldry.

² Smeared.

Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear; for, lo! his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.

But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack¹ stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death; anon, the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forged for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you
 gods,

In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!'—

Po. 'Tis too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—
Pr'ythee, say on: he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry,
or he sleeps. Say on: come to Hecuba.

¹ Light clouds.

1 Play. 'But who, ah, woe! had seen the mobled queen——'¹

Ham. The mobled queen?

Po. That's good; mobled queen is good.

1 Play. 'Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames

With bisson² rheum; a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'erteemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;—
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced:

But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs;
The instant burst of clamor that she made,
(Unless things mortal move them not at all)
Would have made milch the burning eye of
heaven,
And passion in the gods.'

Po. Look, whether he has not turned his color,
and has tears in 's eyes.—Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest
of this soon.—Good my lord, will you see the
players well bestowed? Do you hear? let them be

¹ i. e. the queen attired in a coarse and careless bed dress.

² Blind.

well used; for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time. After your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Po. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Odd's bodikin, man, much better: use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honor and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. 'Take them in.

Po. Come, sirs.

[Exit Polonius, with some of the Players.]

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow.—Dost thou hear me, old friend? can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1 Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in 't; could you not?

1 Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well.—Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. *[Exit Player.]* My good friends, *[to Ro. and Guil.]* I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ro. Good my lord!

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

Ham. Ay, so, good bye to you.—Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit.
That, from her working, all his visage wann'd ;
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit ?—and all for nothing !
For Hecuba !

What 's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her ? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion,
That I have ? He would drown the stage with
tears,

And cleave the general ear¹ with horrid speech ;
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free ;
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears.—Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing ; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat² was made. Am I a coward ?
Who calls me villain ? breaks my pate across ?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face ?
Tweaks me by the nose ? gives me the lie i' the
throat,
As deep as to the lungs ? Who does me this ?
Ha !

¹ i. e. the ear of all mankind.

² Destruction.

Why, I should take it ; for it cannot be,
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter ; or, ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain !
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless¹ vil-
lain !

Why, what an ass am I ! This is most brave ;
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion !

Fie upon 't ! foh ! About my brains ! Humph ! I
have heard,

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have, by the very cunning of the scene,
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions :
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these
players

Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle : I'll observe his looks ;
I'll tent him² to the quick : if he do blench,³
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil ; and the devil hath power

¹ Unnatural.

² Search his wounds.

³ Shrink or start.

'To assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and, perhaps,
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
(As he is very potent with such spirits)
Abuses me to damn me. I 'll have grounds
More relative than this : the play 's the thing.
Wherein I 'll catch the conscience of the king.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A room in the castle.

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSEN-
CRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you, by no drift of conference,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy ?

Ro. He does confess, he feels himself distracted ;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded ;
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well ?

Ro. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ro. Niggard of question ; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ro. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught¹ on the way: of these we told
him;

And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: they are about the court;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Po. 'Tis most true;
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me

To hear him so inclined.
Good gentlemen, give him a farther edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ro. We shall, my lord.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too:
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither;
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront² Ophelia.

Her father and myself, lawful espials,³
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be the affliction of his love, or no,

Overtook.

² Meet

³ Spies.

That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you :
And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness : so shall I hope, your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honors.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit Queen.*]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious, so please
you,

We will bestow ourselves.—Read on this book :

[*To Ophelia.*]

That show of such an exercise may color
Your loneliness.—We are oft to blame in this :—
'Tis too much proved,¹—that, with devotion's
visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. O, 'tis too true ! how smart
A lash that speech doth give my conscience !
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
O heavy burden ! [aside.]

Pol. I hear him coming ; let's withdraw, my lord.

[*Exeunt King and Polonius.*]

¹ i. e. it is found by too frequent experience.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question :—
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune ;
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing, end them ?—To die,—to sleep.—
No more ; and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die,—to sleep ;—
To sleep ! perchance to dream ;—ay, there's the
rub ;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,¹
Must give us pause. There's the respect,²
That makes calamity of so long life ;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels³ bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life ;
But that the dread of something after death.—
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn⁴

¹ Stir, bustle.² Packs or burdens³ Consideration.⁴ Boundary, limits.

No traveller returns,—puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now!
'The fair Ophelia.—Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honor for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to redeliver:
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honor'd lord, you know right well you
did;

And with them words of so sweet breath composed,
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
'Take these again; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord?

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have a better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it. I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us: go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this

plague for thy dowry :—be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery ; farewell : or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool ; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go ; and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. Heavenly powers, restore him !

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough : God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another ; you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance.¹ Go to ; I'll no more of 't ; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages : those that are married already, all but one, shall live ; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit Hamlet.*

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown !
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,
sword ;

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers ! quite, quite down !
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh ;
'That unmatched'd form and feature of blown youth

¹ i. e. you mistake by wanton affectation, and pretend to mistake by ignorance.

Blasted with ecstasy.¹ O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter KING and POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way
tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his
soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger; which for to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down:—he shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself.—What think you on 't?

Pol. It shall do well: but yet I do believe,
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia?
You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let my queen mother all alone entreat him

¹ Alienation of mind

To show his grief; let her be round with him;¹
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference: if she find him not,
To England send him, or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A hall in the same.

Enter HAMLET and certain PLAYERS.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings,² who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise: I would

¹ i. e. reprimand him with freedom.

² The meaner people seem to have sat in the pit in the time of our author.

have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant: it outherods Herod.¹ Pray you, avoid it.

1 Play. I warrant your honor.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure.² Now this overdone or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one, must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players, that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 Play. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those

¹ The character of Herod in the ancient mysteries was always violent.

² i. e. impression or resemblance, as in a print.

that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them ; for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too ; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered : that's villanous ; and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go ; make you ready. *[Exeunt Players.]*

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord ? will the king hear this piece of work ?

Po. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste.—

[Exit Polonius.]

Will you two help to hasten them ?

Both. Ay, my lord.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

Ham. What, ho, Horatio !

Enter HORATIO.

Ho. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art ev'n as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

Ho. O, my dear lord,——

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter :
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee ? Why should the poor be
flatter'd ? .

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp ;
And crook the pregnant ¹ hinges of the knee,
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear ?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish her election,
She hath seal'd thee for herself ; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing ;
A man, that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks : and bless'd are those,
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.
There is a play to-night before the king :
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle : if his occulted ² guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy.³ Give him heedful note :
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face ;
And, after, we will both our judgments join

¹ Quick, ready.

² Secret.

³ A stithy is a smith's shop.

In censure¹ of his seeming.

Ho. Well, my lord,

If he steal aught, the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be
idle:

Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN,
POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,
and others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith; of the camelion's dish:
I eat the air, promise-crammed: you cannot feed
capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet;
these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now.—My lord, you played
once in the university, you say? [*to Polonius.*

Po. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a
good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Po. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was killed i' the
Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital
a calf there.—Be the players ready?

Ro. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet; sit by me.

¹ Opinion.

Ham. No, good mother; here's metal more attractive.

Po. O, ho! do you mark that? *[to the King.]*

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[lying down at Ophelia's feet.]

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O! your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables.¹ O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by'r lady, he must build churches then, or else shall he suffer not thinking

¹ The richest dress.

on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is, 'For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.'

Trumpets sound. The dumb show follows.

Enter a KING and a QUEEN very lovingly, the Queen embracing him and he her: she kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him: he takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck; lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon, comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner woos the Queen with gifts: she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love. [Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry this is miching mallecho;¹ it means mischief.

Oph. Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter PROLOGUE.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

¹ Secret wickedness.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him;
be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to
tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught: I'll mark
the play.

Pro. 'For us and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.'

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a KING and a QUEEN.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart
gone round
Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orb'd ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,¹
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and
moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,

¹ Splendor, lustre.

That I distrust you ; yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must :
For women fear too much, even as they love ;
And women's fear and love hold quantity ;
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now what my love is, proof hath made you know ;
And as my love is sized,¹ my fear is so.
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear ;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

P. King. Faith, I must leave thee, love, and
shortly too :

My operant² powers their functions leave to do ;
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honor'd, beloved ; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou——

P. Queen. O, confound the rest !
Such love must needs be treason in my breast :
In second husband let me accursed !
None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

Ham. That's wormwood.

P. Queen. The instances,³ that second marriage
move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love ;
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

P. King. I do believe you think what now you
speak,
But what we do determine oft we break.

¹ i. e. in proportion to the extent of my love.

² Active.

³ Motives.

Purpose is but the slave to memory ;
Of violent birth, but poor validity ;
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,
But fall unshaken when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
'To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt ;
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
'The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
'The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy :
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament ;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
'This world is not for aye ; nor 'tis not strange,
'That even our loves should with our fortunes
change ;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
'The great man down, you mark, his favorite flies ;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies :
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend :
For who not needs shall never lack a friend ;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun ;—
Our wills and fates do so contrary run,
That our devices still are overthrown ;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our
own :
So think thou wilt no second husband wed :
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is
dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heavens
light!

Sport and repose lock from me, day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's¹ cheer in prison be my scope!
Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now,——

[*to Ophelia.*

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me
here awhile;

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [sleeps.

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain!

[*Erit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, me-thinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there
no offence in 't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no
offence i' the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap.² Marry, how? Tro-

¹ An anchoret's. ² i. e. to detect the villany of the king.

pically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: but what of that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade wince; our withers are unwrung.

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.¹

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you mistake your husbands.—Begin, murderer;—leave thy damnable faces, and begin.—Come;—

——‘The croaking raven
Doth bellow for revenge.’

Lu. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and
time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban ² thrice blasted, thrice infected,

¹ In allusion to the interpreter who formerly sat on the stage at all motions or puppet-shows, and interpreted to the audience.

² Curse.

Thy natural magic and dire property
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.]

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate :
his name's Gonzago : the story is extant, and
written in very choice Italian. You shall see anon,
how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What ! frightened with false fire ?

Queen. How fares my lord ?

Po. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light :—away !

Po. Lights, lights, lights !

[Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.]

Ham. ' Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungalled play ;

For some must watch, while some must sleep :

Thus runs the world away.'

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the
rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me) with two
Provincial roses on my razed¹ shoes, get me a
fellowship in a cry² of players, sir ?

Ho. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.

' For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself ; and now reigns here

A very, very—peacock.'

¹ Slashed.

² Pack, company.

Ho. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Ho. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning,——

Ho. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come, some music; come, the recorders: ¹—

For, if the king like not the comedy,

Why then, belike,—he likes it not, perdy.²—

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Come, some music.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir,——

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would perhaps plunge him into more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

¹ A recorder here signifies a kind of flute.

² A corruption of *par Dieu*.

Ham. I am tame, sir : pronounce.

Guil. The queen your mother in most great affliction of spirit hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed : if it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment ; if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord ?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer ; my wit's diseased : but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command ; or, rather, as you say, my mother : therefore no more, but to the matter : my mother, you say,——

Ro. Then thus she says : your behavior hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother !—But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration ? impart.

Ro. She desires to speak with you in her closet ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey were she ten times our mother. Have you any farther trade with us ?

Ro. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.¹

Ro. Good my lord, what is your cause of dis-

¹ i. e. by these hands.

temper? you do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ro. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but, 'while the grass grows,'——the proverb is something musty.

Enter PLAYERS, with recorders.

O, the recorders:—let me see one.—To withdraw with you:——Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages¹ with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony: I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing

¹ Holes.

you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. Blood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir!

Po. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Po. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Po. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or like a whale?

Po. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by.—They fool me to the top of my bent.¹—I will come by and by.

Po. I will say so. *[Exit Polonius.]*

Ham. By and by is easily said.—Leave me, friends. *[Exeunt Ro. Guil. Ho. &c.]*

'Tis now the very witching time of night,

¹ Utmost stretch.

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HAMLET,

ACT III.

When churchyards yawit, and hell itself breathes
out

Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot
blood,

And do such business as the bitter day
Would quake to look on. Soft; now to my
mother.—

O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:

Let me be cruel, not unnatural.

I will speak daggers to ner, but use none:

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites.

How in my words soever she be shent,¹

To give them seals,² never, my soul, consent!

[Exit

SCENE III.

A room in the same.

Enter KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,
To let his madness range: therefore, prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you:
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so near us, as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide:

¹ Reproved.

² i. e. put them in execution.

Most holy and religious fear it is,
To keep those many many bodies safe,
That live and feed upon your majesty.

Ro. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from 'noyance ; but much more
That spirit, upon whose weal depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone ; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What 's near it, with it : it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortised and adjoin'd ; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy
voyage ;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ro. Guil. We will haste us.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Enter POLONIUS.

Po. My lord, he 's going to his mother's closet :
Behind the arras I 'll convey myself,
To hear the process ; I 'll warrant, she 'll tax him
home :
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet, that some more audience than a mother,

~~Since~~ nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege :
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King.

Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit Polonius.*]

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven :
It hath the primal, eldest curse upon 't ;—
A brother's murder ! Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will :
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood ?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow ? Whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence ?
And what 's in prayer, but this twofold force ;—
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down ? Then I'll look up ;
My fault is past : but, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn ? Forgive me my foul murder !—
'That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder ;—
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd, and retain the offence ?
In the corrupted currents of this world.
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice ;
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law : but 'tis not so above ;

'There is no shuffling; there the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: what can it not?
Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels, make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees! and, heart, with strings of
steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe:
All may be well! *[retires and kneels.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying:
And now I'll do 't:—and so he goes to heaven:
And so am I revenged? That would be scann'd:¹
A villain kills my father; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And, how his audit stands, who knows, save
Heaven?

But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him: and am I then revenged,

¹ Should be considered.

To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?

No.

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent :¹
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage ;
Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed ;
At gaming, swearing ; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't ;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays :
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [Exit.

The King rises, and advances.

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain
below :
'thout thoughts, never to heaven go.
[Exit.

SCENE IV.

Another room in the same.

Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.

will come straight. Look, you lay home
o him :
his pranks have been too broad to bear
with ;

¹ Seizure, surprisal.

And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between

Much heat and him. I'll silence me ev'n here.

Pray you, be round with him.

Queen. I'll warrant you;
Fear me not.—Withdraw; I hear him coming.
[*Polonius hides himself.*]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother; what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood,¹ not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And,—would it were not so!—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;

¹ Cross.

You go not, till I set you up a glass,
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder
me?

Help, help, ho!

Po. [behind.] What, ho! help!

Ham. How now! a rat? [*draws.*] Dead, for a
ducat, dead.

[Hamlet makes a pass through the arras.]

Po. [behind.] O, I am slain. [*falls, and dies.*]

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not:

Is it the king?

[lifts up the arras, and draws forth Polonius.]

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is
this!

Ham. A bloody deed:—almost as bad, good
mother,

As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king?

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

[to Polonius.]

I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune:

Thou find'st, to be too busy is some danger.—

Leave wringing of your hands: peace; sit you
down,

And let me wring your heart; for so I shali,

If it be made of penetrable stuff;

If damned custom have not brazed it so,

That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag
thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act,
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty ;
Calls virtue, hypocrite ; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there ; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths : O, such a deed,
As from the body of contraction ¹ plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words : heaven's face doth glow ;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful ² visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ah me, what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index ? ³

Ham. Look here upon this picture and on this ;
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow :
Hyperion's ⁴ curls ; the front of Jove himself ;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ;
A station ⁵ like the herald Mercury,
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;
A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,

¹ Contraction, for marriage contract.

² Sorrowful.

³ Indices were inserted at the beginning of books in the time of our author.

⁴ Apollo's.

⁵ Station here means the act of standing.

To give the world assurance of a man :
 This was your husband.—Look you now, what follows :

Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear,
 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ?
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
 And batten¹ on this moor ? Ha ! have you eyes ?
 You cannot call it love ; for, at your age,
 The heyday in the blood is tame, it 's humble,
 And waits upon the judgment ; and what judgment

Would step from this to this ? Sense,² sure, you have,

Else could you not have motion : but, sure, that sense

Is apoplex'd ; for madness would not err ;
 Nor sense to ecstasy³ was ne'er so thrall'd,
 But it reserved some quantity of choice,
 To serve in such a difference. What devil was 't,
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind ?⁴
 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans⁵ all,
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense
 Could not so mope.⁶

O shame, where is thy blush ? Rebellious hell,
 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,

¹ Grow fat. ² Sensation. ³ Alienation of mind.

⁴ Blindman's-buff, ⁵ Without.

⁶ Could not exhibit so much stupidity.

And melt in her own fire : proclaim no shame,
When the compulsive ardor gives the charge ;
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders well.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more :
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul ;
And there I see such black and grained spots.
As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed ;
Stew'd in corruption ; honeying, and making love
Over the nasty sty ;——

Queen. O, speak to me no more :
These words like daggers enter in mine ears :
No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murderer, and a villain :
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord :—a vice of kings :¹
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule ;
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket !

Queen. No more.

Enter GHOST.

Ham. A king of shreds and patches.—
Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings.
You heavenly guards !—What would your gracious
figure ?

¹ i. e. a low mimic of kings. The vice was the *foe* of the old moralities.

Queen. Alas, he's mad.

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to
chide,

That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

Ghost. Do not forget, this visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit¹ in weakest bodies strongest works:
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,
Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

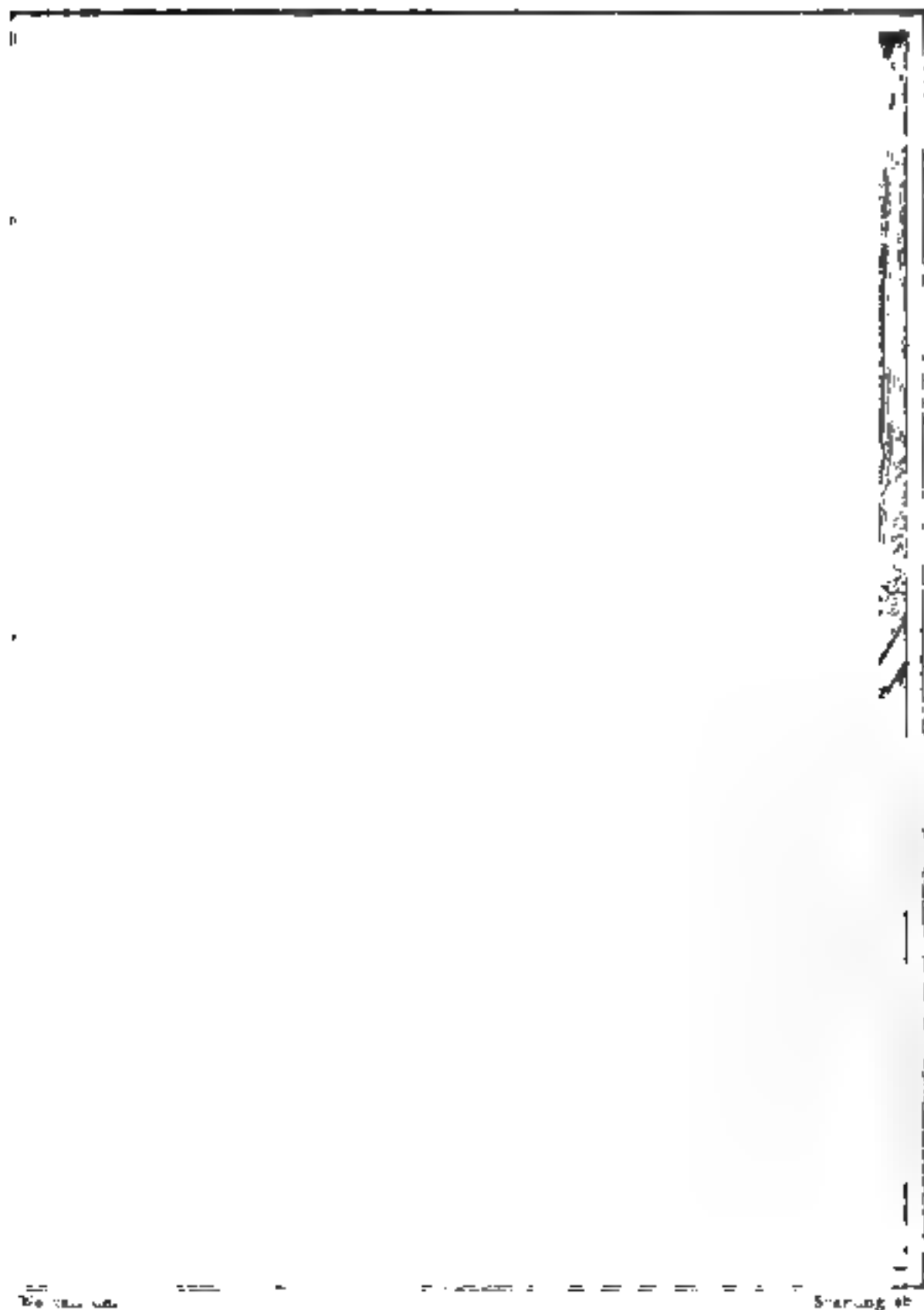
Ham. On him! on him!—Look you, how pale
he glares!

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable.²—Do not look upon
me;

Lest, with this piteous action, you convert

¹ Imagination.

² Endued with understanding



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HAMLET.

Queen Hamlet's Ghost.

Act III. Scene IV.

My stern effects :¹ then what I have to do
Will want true color ; tears, perchance, for blood,

Queen. To whom do you speak this ?

Ham. Do you see nothing there ?

Queen. Nothing at all ; yet all, that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear ?

Queen. No, nothing, but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there ! look, how it steals
away !

My father, in his habit as he lived !

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal !

[*Exit Ghost.*]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain :
This bodiless creation ecstasy²
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy !

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness,
That I have utter'd : bring me to the test,
And I the matter will reword, which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks :
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place ;
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to Heaven ;
Repent what's past ; avoid what is to c
And do not spread the compost on the w

¹ Actions.

² Ecstasy

To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue ;
For, in the fatness of these pursy times,
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg ;
Yea, curb¹ and woo, for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet ! thou hast cleft my heart in
twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night : but go not to my uncle's bed ,
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this ;
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night ;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence ; the next more easy :
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either curb the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night ;
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,
[*pointing to Polonius.*

I do repent ; but Heaven hath pleased it so,—
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him : so, again, good night !—

¹ Rand

I must be cruel, only to be kind :
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—
But one word more, good lady.

Queen. What shall I do ?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do :
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed ;
Pinch wanton on your cheek ; call you his mouse ;
And let him, for a pair of reechy¹ kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft : 'twere good, you let him know :
For who, that 's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock,² from a bat, a gib,³
Such dear concernings hide ? who would do so ?
No, in despite of sense and secresy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top ;
Let the birds fly ; and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions,⁴ in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assured, if words be made of
breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England ; you know that ?

Queen. Alack !
I had forgot ; 'tis so concluded on.

¹ Steaming with heat.

² Toad.

³ Cat.

⁴ Experiments.

Ham. There 's letters seal'd ; and my two school-fellows,—

Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,¹—
They bear the mandate ; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery : let it work ;
For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petar ; ² and it shall go hard,
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon : O, 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.—
This man shall set me packing.
I 'll lug the guts into the neighbor room.—
Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave.
Who was in life a foolish, prating knave.—
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.—
Good night, mother.

[Exeunt severally ; Hamlet dragging in Polonius.]

¹ i. e. with their poisonous teeth undrawn.

² Blown up with his own bomb.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

The same.

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDEN-
SIERN.

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves:

You must translate: 'tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.—

[to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who go out.]

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend

Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
He whips his rapier out, and cries, 'A rat! a rat!'
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there.

His liberty is full of threats to all;

'To you yourself, to us, to every one.

Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?

It will be laid to us, whose providence

Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of
haunt,¹

This mad young man ; but, so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit ;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
'To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone ?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd ;
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore,
Among a mineral ² of metals base,
Shows itself pure : he weeps for what is done.

King. O, Gertrude, come away !
'The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence ; and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho ! Guildenstern !

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some farther aid :
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him.
Go, seek him out ; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[Exeunt Ro. and Guil.]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done : so, haply, slander,—

¹ Company.

² Mine.

Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,¹
Transports his poison'd shot,—may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air.—O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Another room in the same.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. ——Safely stowed.—[*Ro. &c. within,*
'Hamlet! lord Hamlet!'] But soft; what noise?
who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ro. What have you done, my lord, with the dead
body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ro. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it
thence,

And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ro. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not
mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!
what replication should be made by the son of a
king?

Ro. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

¹ Mark.

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed; when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ro. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ro. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing——

Guil. A thing, my lord?

Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after.¹ [Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Another room in the same.

Enter KING, attended.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.

How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose!

Yet must not we put the strong law on him:

He's loved of the distracted multitude.

Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;

¹ A childish sport, so called.

And, where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and
even,

This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause : diseases, desperate grown,
By desperate appliance are relieved,

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

Or not at all.—How now ? what hath befallen ?

Ro. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he ?

Ro. Without, my lord ; guarded, to know your
pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ro. Ho, Guildenstern ! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius ?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper ? Where ?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten :
a certain convocation of politic worms are ev'n at
him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet :
we fat all creatures else, to fat us ; and we fat our-
selves for maggots : your fat king, and your lean
beggar, is but variable service ; two dishes, but to
one table ; that's the end.

King. Alas, alas !

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath

eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself: but, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go, seek him there. [*to some Attendants.*

Ham. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—

Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee
hence

With fiery quickness: therefore prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help;
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them: but, come;
for Engiand!—Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: father and mother is man and

wife, man and wife is one flesh ; and so, my mother.
Come, for England. *[Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot ; tempt him with speed
aboard ;

Delay it not ; I'll have him hence to-night :
Away ; for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair : pray you, make haste.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense ;
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us) thou mayst not coldly set¹
Our sovereign process ; which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England ;
For, like the hectic in my blood, he rages,
And thou must cure me : till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin.

SCENE IV.

A plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS and Forces marching.

For. Go, captain ; from me greet the Danish
king :
Tell him, that, by his license, Fortinbras

¹ Value. estimate.

Craves the conveyance of a promised march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye,
And let him know so.

Cap. I will do 't, my lord.

For. Go softly on.

[Exeunt Fortinbras and Forces.]

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, &c.

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purposed, sir,
I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who
Commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground,
That hath in it no profit but the name:
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand
ducats,

Will not debate the question of this straw :
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace ;
'That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.

Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit Captain.*

Ro. Will 't please you go, my lord ?

Ham. I will be with you straight. Go a little
before. [*Exeunt Ro. and Guit.*

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge ! What is a man,
If his chief good, and market of his time,
Be but to sleep and feed ? a beast, no more.
Sure, He, that made us with such large discourse,¹
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust² in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven³ scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wis-
dom,

And ever three parts coward ;—I do not know
Why yet I live to say, ' This thing's to do :'
Sith⁴ I have cause, and will, and strength, and
means,

To do 't. Examples gross as earth exhort me :
Witness, this army, of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince ;

¹ Power of comprehension.

² Grew mouldy.

³ Cowardly.

⁴ Since.

Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;
Exposing what is mortal and unsure,
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great,
Is, not to stir without great argument;
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honor's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds; fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough, and continent,¹
To hide the slain?—O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE V.

Elsinore. A room in the castle.

Enter QUEEN and HORATIO.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Ho. She is importunate; indeed, distract;
Her mood will needs be pitied.

¹ Continent here means that which comprehends or encloses.

Queen.

What would she have?

Ho. She speaks much of her father; says, she
hears

There 's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her
heart;

Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,

That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,

Yet the unshaped use of it doth move

The hearers to collection; ¹ they aim ² at it,

And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;

Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield
them,

Indeed would make one think, there might be
thought,

Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Queen. 'Twere good she were spoken with; for
she may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Let her come in.

[*Exit Horatio.*

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,

Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:

So full of artless jealousy is guilt,

It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO, with OPHELIA.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Den-
mark?

¹ i. e. to endeavor to collect some meaning from it.

² Guess.

Queen. How now, Ophelia?

Oph. 'How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.'¹ [singing.]

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

'He is dead and gone, lady, [sings.
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.'

O, ho!

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia,——

Oph. Pray you, mark.

'White his shroud as the mountain snow,' [sings.]

Enter KING.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. 'Larded all with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did go,
With true-love showers.'

King. How do you, pretty lady?

¹ Shoes.

Oph. Well, God 'ield you ! 'They say, the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table !

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray, let us have no words of this ; but when they ask you what it means, say you this :—

' To morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime ;
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine :

' Then up he rose, and don'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber door ;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.'

King. Pretty Ophelia !

Oph. Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an end
on 't :

' By Gis, and by Saint Charity,
Alack, and fie for shame !
Young men will do 't if they come to 't ;
By cock, they are to blame.

' Quoth she, Before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed :

[He answers.]

So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.'

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient; but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies: good night, good night.

[*Exit.*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit Horatio.*

O! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death: and now behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions! First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and
whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but
greenly,¹

In hugger-mugger to inter him: poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures or mere beasts;
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France;
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,

With pestilent speeches of his father's death ;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death ! *[a noise within.*

Queen.

Alack ! what noise is this ?

Enter GENTLEMAN.

King. Attend.

Where are my Switzers ? Let them guard the
door.

What is the matter ?

Gen.

Save yourself, my lord :

The ocean, overpeering of his list,¹
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
'Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord ;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry, ' Choose we ; Laertes shall be king !'
Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds ;—
' Laertes shall be king, Laertes king !'

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail² they
cry !

O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.³

¹ Boundary .

² Scent.

³ Hounds run counter when they trace the scent backwards.

King. The doors are broke. *[noise within.*

Enter LAERTES armed, DANES following.

Laer. Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

Danes. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

Danes. We will, we will.

[they retire without the door.

Laer. I thank you: keep the door.—O thou vile king,

Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard,

Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unamirched¹ brow
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incensed:—let him go, Gertrude;—

Sneak man

King.

Dead.

Queen.

But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.*Laer.* How came he dead? I'll not be juggled
with :

To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!

Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!

I dare damnation: to this point I stand;—

That both the worlds I give to negligence,

Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged

Most thoroughly for my father.

King.

Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world's;

And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,

They shall go far with little.

King.

Good Laertes,

If you desire to know the certainty

Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your re-
venge,That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and
foe,

Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.*King.*

Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my
arms;

And, like the kind life-rendering pelican,

Repast them with my blood.

King.

Why, now you speak

Like a good child and a true gentleman.

That I am guiltless of your father's death,

And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment 'pear,
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Enter OPHELIA, fantastically dressed with straws and flowers.

O heat, dry up my brains! tears, seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
O heavens! is 't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love; and, where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. 'They bore him barefaced on the bier;
Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny:
And in his grave rain'd many a tear.'—

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade
revenge,
It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, 'Down a-down, an you call
him a-down-a.' O, how the wheel¹ becommes it!

¹ The burthen of the song.

HAMLET.
King Henry Lear's Ophelia's Son
Act IV Scene I

It is the false steward that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines:—there's rue for you; and here's some for me:—we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays:—you may wear your rue with a difference.¹—There's a daisy:—I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died:—they say, he made a good end;—

‘For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.’ [*sings.*

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favor and to prettiness.

Oph. ‘And will he not come again? [*sings.*
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead;
Go to thy death-bed;
He never will come again.

¹ i. e. by its Sunday name, herb of grace; while mine retains the name of rue, i. e. sorrow.

‘ His beard was as white as snow ;
All flaxen was his poll :
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan ;
God ‘a mercy on his soul !’

And of all christian souls, I pray God. God be wi’
you ! *[Exit Ophelia.]*

Laer. Do you see this, O God ?

King. Laertes, I must commune¹ with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge ‘twixt you and me.
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch’d, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction ; but, if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labor with your soul
To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so ;
His means of death, his obscure funeral ;—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o’er his bones,
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation ;
Cry to be heard, as ‘twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call ‘t in question.

King. So you shall ;

¹ Participate.

And, where the offence is. let the great axe fall.

I pray you, go with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

Another room in the same.

Enter HORATIO and SERVANT.

Ho. What are they that would speak with me?

Ser.

Sailors, sir :

They say, they have letters for you.

Ho.

Let them come in. —

[*Exit Servant.*]

I do not know from what part of the world

I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter SAILORS.

1 *Sail.* God bless you, sir.

Ho. Let him bless thee too.

1 *Sail.* He shall, sir, an 't please him. There 's a letter for you, sir : it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England, if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Ho. [*reads.*] 'Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king : they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase : finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valor, and in the grapple I boarded them : on the instant, they got clear of our

ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy, but they knew what they did: I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb, yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

‘He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.’

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do 't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

Another room in the same.

Enter KING and LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance
seal,

And you must put me in your heart for friend;
Sith¹ you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he, which hath your noble father slain,
Pursued my life.

Laer. It well appears.—But tell me,

¹ Since.

Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things
else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O, for two special reasons ;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his
mother

Lives almost by his looks ; and for myself,
(My virtue or my plague, be it either which)
She is so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender¹ bear him ;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Work like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves² to graces ; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost ;
A sister driven into desperate terms ;
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,³
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections !—But my revenge will come.

¹ Common people.

² Fetters.

³ i. e. if I may praise what has been, but is now to be found
no more.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must
not think,
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear
more:
I loved your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—
How now? what news?

Enter MESSENGER.

Mes. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! Who brought them?

Mes. Sailors, my lord, they say: I saw them
not;
They were given me by Claudio; he received them
Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.—
Leave us. *[Exit Messenger.]*

[reads.] 'High and mighty, you shall know I am
set naked on your kingdom: to-morrow shall I beg
leave to see your kingly eyes; when I shall, first
asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasions
of my sudden and more strange return.'

'HAMLET.'

What should this mean? Are all the rest come
back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

— *Laer.* Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. 'Naked,'—
And, in a postscript here, he says, 'alone.'
Can you advise me?

Laer. I am lost in it, my lord: but let him come:
't warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live, and tell him to his teeth,
'Thus diddest thou.'

King. If it be so, Laertes,—
As how should it be so?—how otherwise?—
Will you be ruled by me?

Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now re-
turn'd,—
As checking at¹ his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it,—I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be ruled;
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality,

¹ Starting from. A phrase borrowed from falconry

We should do when we would; for this 'would'
changes,
And hath abatements and delays as many,
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the
ulcer:—

Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,
To show yourself in deed your father's son
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctua-
rise;

Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes.
Will you do this? Keep close within your chamber:
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, to-
gether,

And wager o'er your heads: he, being remiss,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated,¹ and, in a pass of practice,
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't;
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.

: Not blunted as foils are.

I bought an unction of a mountebank,
 So mortal, that, but dip a knife in it,
 Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so rare,
 Collected from all simples that have virtue
 Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
 That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point
 With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
 It may be death.

King. Let's farther think of this;
 Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,
 May fit us to our shape: if this should fail,
 And that our drift look through our bad per-
 formance,

'Twere better not assay'd; therefore, this project
 Should have a back, or second, that might hold,
 If this should blast in proof.¹ Soft;—let me see:—
 We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings.²—
 I ha't.

When in your motion you are hot and dry,
 (As make your bouts more violent to that end)
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have preferr'd him
 A chalice for the nonce;³ whereon but sipping,
 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,⁴
 Our purpose may hold there.—But, stay, what
 noise?

¹ i. e. as the arms sometimes burst in proving their strength.

² Skill.

³ I will have presented to him a cup for the purpose.

⁴ Thrust.

Enter QUEEN.

How now, sweet queen?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow. Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows ascuant the
brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal¹ shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call
them:

There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread
wide;

And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:
Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes;
As one incapable² of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element: but long it could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas, then, she is drown'd?

¹ Licentious.

² Insensible.

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick; Nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord!
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly drowns it. [*Erit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude.
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I, this will give it start again;
Therefore let's follow. [*Exeunt.*

A C T V.

SCENE I.

A churchyard.

Enter TWO CLOWNS, with spades, &c.

1 *Clown.* Is she to be buried in christian burial
that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clown.* I tell thee she is, therefore make her
grave straight:¹ the crowner hath set on her, and
finds it christian burial.

1 *Clown.* How can that be unless she drowned
herself in her own defence?

¹ Immediately.

2 *Clown*. Why, 'tis found so.

1 *Clown*. It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else: for here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform: argal she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *Clown*. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1 *Clown*. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 *Clown*. But is this law?

1 *Clown*. Ay, marry, is't; crowner's quest law.

2 *Clown*. Will you ha'the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of christian burial.

1 *Clown*. Why, there thou sayest: and the more pity, that great folks shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even¹ christian. Come; my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clown*. Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clown*. He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clown*. Why, he had none.

¹ Fellow.

1 *Clown*. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the scripture? The scripture says, Adam digged: could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself——

2 *Clown*. Go to.

1 *Clown*. What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clown*. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clown*. I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well: but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill, to say the gallows is built stronger than the church; argul, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come.

2 *Clown*. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clown*. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.¹

2 *Clown*. Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clown*. To't.

2 *Clown*. Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.

1 *Clown*. Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating: and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker; the houses that he makes

¹ Give over.

last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan, and
fetch me a stoup of liquor. *[Exit 2 Clown.]*

1 Clown digs and sings.

‘ In youth when I did love, did love,¹
Methought, it was very sweet,
To contract; O, the time, for, ah, my behove
O, methought, there was nothing meet.’

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business?
he sings at grave-making.

Ho. Custom hath made it in him a property of
easiness.

Ham. ‘Tis ev’n so: the hand of little employment
hath the daintier sense.

1 Clown. ‘ But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw’d me in his clutch;
And hath shipped me into the land,
As if I had never been such.’
[throws up a scull.]

Ham. That scull had a tongue in it, and could
sing once; how the knave jowls it to the ground,
as if it were Cain’s jawbone, that did the first
murder! This might be the pate of a politician,
which this ass now o’er-reaches; one that would
circumvent God;—might it not?

¹ This song was written by Lord Vaux, and is printed
intire in Percy’s Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.

Ho. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say, 'Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?' This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Ho. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, ev'n so: and now my lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats¹ with them? mine ache to think on't.

1 Clown. 'A pickaxe, and a spade, a spade,

[sings.

For—and a shrouding sheet:

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.'

[throws up a scull.

Ham. There's another. Why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits² now, his quilllets,³ his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognisances, his fines,

¹ An ancient game resembling quoits.

² Subtilties.

³ Nice and frivolous distinctions.

his double vouchers, his recoveries. Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Ho. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Ho. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow.—Whose grave 's this, sirrah?

1 Clown. Mine, sir.—

‘ O, a pit of clay for to be made [*sings.*
For such a guest is meet.’

Ham. I think it be thine indeed, for thou liest in 't.

1 Clown. You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in 't, yet it is mine.

Ham. 'Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't, and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

1 Clown. 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1 Clown. For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman then?

1 Clown. For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in 't?

1 Clown. One, that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she 's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card,¹ or equivocation will undo us. By the lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked,² that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1 Clown. Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long 's that since?

1 Clown. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was that very day that young Hamlet was born;—he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

1 Clown. Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1 Clown. 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

¹ i. e. we must speak with the same precision as is observed in marking the true distances of coasts, &c. in a sea chart, which in our poet's time was called a card.

² Spruce, affected.

Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam: and why of that loam whereto he was converted, might they not stop a Leer-barrel?

Imperious¹ Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O, that the earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!²
But soft! but soft! aside:—here comes the king,

Enter PRIESTS, &c. in procession; the corpse of Ophelia, LAERTES and Mourners following; KING, QUEEN, their trains, &c.

The queen, the courtiers! Who is this they follow,
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken,
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo³ its own life: 'twas of some estate.
Couch we awhile, and mark. [*retiring with Horatio.*

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham.

That is Laertes,

A very noble youth. Mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

1 *Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarged
As we have warranty: her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodged
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,

¹ Imperial.

² Blast.

³ Undo, destroy.

Shards,¹ flints, and pebbles should be thrown on
her :

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,²
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done ?

1 Priest. No more be done !
We should profane the service of the dead,
'To sing a *requiem*,³ and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' the earth ;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring !—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia ?

Queen. Sweets to the sweet : farewell !

[scattering flowers.]

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife ;
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of !—Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.

[leaps into the grave.]

¹ Broken pots or tiles.

² Garlands.

³ A mass for the dead.

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
'Till of this flat a mountain you have made
'To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*advancing.*] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis; whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them
stand

Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*leaps into the grave.*

Laer. The devil take thy soul!
[*grappling with him.*

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenetic and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,——

Ho. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of
the grave.*

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this
theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O, my son, what theme?

Ham. I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?

King. O he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. Zounds, show me what thou 'lt do :
Woul't weep? woul't fight? woul't fast? woul't
tear thyself?

Woul't drink up Esil?¹ eat a crocodile?
I 'll do 't.—Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I :
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us ; till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart ! Nay, an thou 'lt mouth,
I 'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness ;
And thus awhile the fit will work on him :
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,²
His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir ;
What is the reason that you use me thus ?
I loved you ever : but it is no matter ;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day.

[*Exit.*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon
him. [*Exit Horatio.*

¹ Eisel is vinegar ; but Steevens conjectures the Weisel is here meant, a river which falls into the Baltic ocean.

² Hatched.

Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech ;
[*to Laertes.*]

We'll put the matter to the present push.—
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son. —
This grave shall have a living monument.
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see ;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A hall in the castle.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, sir : now shall you see
the other :—

You do remember all the circumstance ?

Ho. Remember it, my lord !

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of
fighting,

That would not let me sleep : methought, I lay
Worse than the mutines¹ in the bilboes.² Rashly,
And praised be rashness for it,—let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall ;³ and that should
teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,

¹ Mutineers.

² The bilboes is a bar of iron with fetters annexed, by which disorderly sailors were anciently linked together.

³ Fail.

Rough-hew them how we will.

Ho.

'That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them : had my desire ,
Finger'd their packet ; and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again ; making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission ; where I found, Horatio,
A royal knavery ; an exact command,—
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho ! such bugs¹ and goblins in my life,—
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Ho.

Is 't possible ?

Ham. Here 's the commission ; read it at more
leisure.

But wilt thou hear now how I did proceed ?

Ho. I beseech you.

Ham. Being thus benetted round with villanies.
Or² I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play ;—I sat me down ;
Devised a new commission ; wrote it fair.
I once did hold it, as our statist³ do,
A baseness to write fair, and labor'd much
How to forget that learning ; but, sir, now

¹ Bugbears.

SHAK.

² Before.

XIV.

³ Statesmen.

L

It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know
'The effect of what I wrote ?

Ho. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,—
As England was his faithful tributary ;
As love between them like the palm might flourish ;
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma ¹ 'tween their amities ;
And many such like as's of great charge ;—
'That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement farther, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.²

Ho. How was this seal'd ?

Ham. Why, even in that was Heaven ordinant :
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal :
Folded the writ up in form of the other ;
Subscribed it ; gave 't the impression ; placed it
safely,
The changeling never known : now, the next day
Was our sea-fight ; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Ho. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment :

They are not near my conscience ; their defeat

¹ A note of connexion.

² Without time for confession of their sins.

Does by their own insinuation grow.

'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Ho. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think thee, stand me now
upon,—

He that hath kill'd my king, and whored my
mother;

Popp'd in between the election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage;—is't not perfect con-
science,

To quit¹ him with this arm? and is't not to be
damn'd,

To let this canker of our nature come
In farther evil?

Ho. It must be shortly known to him from Eng-
land,

What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life no more than to say, one.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I'll count² his favors;
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

¹ Requite.

² i. e. make account of, value.

Ho.

Peace : who comes here ?

Enter OSRIC.

Os. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly ?

Ho. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious ; for 'tis a vice to know him : he hath much land, and fertile : let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess : 'tis a chough ;¹ but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Os. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit.—Your bonnet to his right use ; 'tis for the head.

Os. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold ; the wind is northerly.

Os. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry and hot ; or my complexion——

Os. Exceedingly, my lord ; it is very sultry,—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how.—My lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head : Sir, this is the matter ;——

¹ A bird of the jackdaw kind,

Ham. I beseech you, remember——

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*]

Os. Nay, good my lord; for my ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes: believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences,¹ of very soft society, and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card² or calendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.³

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; and yet but raw neither, in respect of his quick sail: but, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and, who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Os. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Os. Sir?

Ho. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

¹ Distinguishing excellences.

² Compass or chart.

³ 'You shall find him containing every quality which a gentleman would desire to contemplate for imitation.'—Johnson.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Os. Of Laertes?

Ho. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Os. I know, you are not ignorant——

Ham. I would, you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve¹ me.—Well, sir.

Os. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is——

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Os. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed² he's unfellowed.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Os. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Os. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses; against the which he has impawned,³ as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers,⁴ and so: three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

¹ Recommend.

² Excellence.

³ Staked.

⁴ That part of the belt by which the sword was suspended.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Ho. I knew you must be edified by the margin¹ ere you had done.

Os. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german² to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides; I would it might be hangers till then. But, on. Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this impawned, as you call it?

Os. The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid, on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How, if I answer, no?

Os. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me: let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Os. Shall I deliver you so?

¹ i. e. the margin of a book which contains explanatory notes. The whole of this dialogue is a ridicule on the court jargon of our author's time.

² Akin.

Ham. To this effect, sir ; after what flourish your nature will.

Os. I commend my duty to your lordship. [*Exit.*

Ham. Yours, yours.—he does well to commend it himself ; there are no tongues else for 's turn.

Ho. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.¹

Ham. He did comply with² his dug before he sucked it. Thus has he (and many more of the same breed, that I know the drossy age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter ;³ a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions ;⁴ and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a LORD.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall : he sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes ; they follow the king's pleasure : if his fitness speaks, mine is

¹ This bird is said to run about as soon as it is hatched.

² Compliment.

³ External politeness.

⁴ 'i. e. their plausibility makes them passable, not only with the weak, but with those of sounder judgment.'—*Steevens.*

ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment¹ to Laertes before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. *[Exit Lord.]*

Ho. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice: I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Ho. Nay, good my lord,——

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gaingiving,² as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Ho. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestal their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit; we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows, what is 't to leave betimes? Let be.

¹ Mild conversation.

² Musgiving.

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, *Lords, OSRIC, and Attendants with foils, &c.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[the King puts the hand of Laertes into that of Hamlet.]

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;

But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.

'This presence¹ knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With sore distraction. What I have done,

That might your nature, hono., and exception

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never, Hamlet:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,

And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,

Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.

Who does it then? His madness. If't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,

Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

'That I have shot my arrow o'er the house.

And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,

¹ i. e. the king and queen.

Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge : but in my terms of honor
I stand aloof ; and will no reconciliation,
Till by some elder masters, of known honor,
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungored : but till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely ;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.—
Give us the foils ; come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes ; in mine ignorance,
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin
Hamlet,
You know the wager ?

Ham. Very well, my lord ;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it ; I have seen you both :
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy ; let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well. These foils have ail a
length ? *[they prepare to play.]*

Os. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoops of wine upon that table.
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,

Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath,
And in the cup an union¹ shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn: give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,
'Now the king drinks to Hamlet.'—Come, begin;—
And you, the judges, hear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*they play.*

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Os. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well;—again.

King. Stay; give me drink: Hamlet, this pearl is
thine;

Here's to thy health.—Give him the cup.

[*trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*

Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.

Come.—Another hit; what say you? [*they play.*

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.—

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin; rub thy brows:

¹ A precious pearl.

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good madam,——

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord : I pray you, pardon me.

King. It is the poison'd cup ; it is too late.

[*aside.*

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam ; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think it.

Laer. And yet it is almost against my conscience. [*aside.*

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes : you do but dally :

I pray you, pass with your best violence.

I am afeard, you make a wanton of me.¹

Laer. Say you so ? come on. [*they play.*

Os. Nothing neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet ; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*

King. Part them ; they are incensed.

Ham. Nay, come again. [*the Queen falls.*

Os. Look to the queen there, ho !

Ho. They bleed on both sides.—How is it, my lord ?

Os. How is 't, Laertes ?

¹ i. e. you trifle with me, as if you were playing with a child.

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe,
Osric :

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the queen ?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no ; the drink, the drink :—O, my
dear Hamlet !—

'The drink, the drink :—I am poison'd ! [*dies.*

Ham. O villany !—Ho ! let the door be lock'd :

Treachery ! seek it out. [*Laertes falls.*

Laer. It is here, Hamlet : Hamlet, thou art
slain ;

No medicine in the world can do thee good ;
In thee there is not half an hour's life ;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated¹ and envenom'd : the foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me ; lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again : thy mother's poison'd ;
I can no more ;—the king, the king's to blame.

Ham. 'The point
Envenom'd too !—Then, venom, to thy work.

[*stabs the King*

Os. and Lords. Treason ! treason !

King. O, yet defend me, friends ; I am but hurt.

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned
Dane,

Drink off this potion :—is the union here ?

Follow my mother. [*King dies.*

¹ Not blunted, without a button.

Laer. He is justly served ;
It is a poison temper'd by himself.—
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet :
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me ! *[dies.]*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it ! I follow
thee.

I am dead, Horatio :—wretched queen, adieu !—
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
'That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time, (as this fell sergeant, Death,
Is strict in his arrest) O, I could tell you ;—
But let it be :—Horatio, I am dead ;
Thou livest : report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Ho. Never believe it ;
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.
Here 's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou 'rt a man,
Give me the cup ; let go : by heaven, I 'll have it.—
O God !—Horatio, what a wounded name,
'Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind
me !

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story. *[march afar off, and shot within.]*

What warlike noise is this ?

Os. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from
Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives

This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio ;
The potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit :
I cannot live to hear the news from England ;
But I do prophesy, the election lights
On Fortinbras ; he has my dying voice :
So tell him, with the occurrents,¹ more and less,
Which have solicited.²—The rest is silence. [*dies.*

Ho. Now cracks a noble heart.—Good night,
sweet prince ;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest !—
Why does the drum come hither ? [*march within.*

Enter FORTINBRAS, the ENGLISH AMBASSADORS, and others.

For. Where is this sight ?

Ho. What is it, you would see ?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

For. This quarry³ cries on⁴ havock !—O proud death !

What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes, at a shot,
So bloodily hast struck ?

1 Am. The sight is dismal ;
And our affairs from England come too late.
The ears are senseless, that should give us hearing,
To tell him, his commandment is fulfill'd ;

¹ For occurrences.
Heap of dead.

² Incited.
⁴ Exclaims against.

That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.—
Where should we have our thanks?

Ho. Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you :
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so iump¹ upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England
Are here arrived ; give order, that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view ;
And let me speak, to the yet unknowing world,
How these things come about : so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts ;
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters ;
Of deaths put on by cunning and forced cause ;
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fallen on the inventors' heads : all this can I
Truly deliver.

For. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune :
I have some rights of memory² in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Ho. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on
more :
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild ; lest more mis-
chance

¹ So exact'y at the time.

² i. e. some rights which are remembered.

On plots and errors happen.

For.

Let four captains

Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage ;

For he was likely, had he been put on,

To have proved most royally ; and, for his passage,

The soldiers' music and the rites of war

Speak loudly for him.—

Take up the bodies : such a sight as this

Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.

Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[a dead march.

*[Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies ; after
which, a peal of ordnance is shot off.]*

**OTHELLO,
THE MOOR OF VENICE.**

HISTORICAL NOTICE

OF

OTHELLO.

A story in Cyathio's novels is the prototype whence our author derived his materials for this sublime and instructive tragedy, which is assigned by Maione, after considerable hesitation, to the date of 1604; while Dr. Drake and Mr. Chalmers conjecture it to be the production of a period as late as 1612 or 1614. This play was first entered at Stationers' Hall Oct. 6, 1621, and appeared in quarto in the course of the following year; between which edition and the folio of 1623 many minute differences exist.

'The beauties of this play,' says Dr. Johnson, 'impress themselves so strongly on the attention of the reader, that they can draw no aid from critical illustration. The fiery openness of Othello, magnanimous, artless, and credulous, boundless in his confidence, ardent in his affection, inflexible in his resolution, and obdurate in his revenge; the cool malignity of Iago, silent in his resentment, subtle in his designs, and studious at once of his interest and his vengeance; the soft simplicity of Desdemona, confident of merit and conscious of innocence, her artless perseverance in her suit, and her slowness to suspect that she can be suspected, are such proofs of Shakspeare's skill in human nature, as, I suppose, it is vain to seek in any modern writer. The gradual progress which Iago

makes in the Moor's conviction, and the circumstances which he employs to inflame him, are so artfully natural, that, though it will perhaps not be said of him as he says of himself, that he is 'a man not easily jealous,' yet we cannot but pity him, when at last we find him 'perplex'd in the extreme.'

'There is always danger, lest wickedness, conjoined with abilities, should steal on esteem, though it misses of approbation; but the character of Iago is so conducted, that he is from the first scene to the last hated and despised.

'Even the inferior characters of this play would be very conspicuous in any other piece, not only for their justness, but their strength. Cassio is brave, benevolent, and honest, ruined only by his want of stubbornness to resist an insidious invitation. Roderigo's suspicious credulity, and impatient submission to the cheats which he sees practised on him, and which by persuasion he suffers to be repeated, exhibit a strong picture of a weak mind betrayed by unlawful desires to a false friend; and the virtue of Emilia is such as we often find; worn loosely, but not cast off; easy to commit small crimes, but quickened and alarmed at atrocious villanies.

'The scenes from the beginning to the end are busy, varied by happy interchanges, and regularly promoting the progression of the story; and the narrative in the end, though it tells but what is known already, yet is necessary to produce the death of Othello.

'Had the scene opened in Cyprus, and the preceding incidents been occasionally related, there had been little wanting to a drama of the most exact and scrupulous regularity.'

A R G U M E N T.

A Moorish general in the service of the Venetians, named Othello, by his valor and mental accomplishments captivates the affections of Desdemona, the only daughter of an eminent senator, who exposes herself to the resentment of an incensed father by eloping with her lover, and becoming his wife. These nuptials are no sooner solemnised, than Othello is required by the senate to assume the command of Cyprus, whither he is followed by Desdemona, whose influence over her husband is exerted in behalf of Cassio, who has been deprived of his lieutenancy for an act of indiscretion, into which he has been betrayed by the devices of Iago, in order that he may at once gratify his diabolical malignity and promote his personal advancement, by instilling groundless suspicions into the ear of his commander, of a criminal attachment subsisting between his wife and Cassio; which he substantiates by so much seeming honesty of purpose and the production of such strong external testimony, that the fierce desire of revenge in the bosom of the Moor stifles the generous sympathies of his nature, and he smothers his innocent wife, leaving the assassination of Cassio to be effected by the agency of his supposed friend, who however fails to accomplish his deadly purpose. The villany of Iago is at length brought to light by his wife Emilia, who is stabbed by her enraged husband; while the unfortunate Othello finds means to elude the vigilance of his attendants, and deprive himself of life by a concealed dagger. In the mean time, Cassio is advanced to the government of Cyprus, and Iago is sentenced to expiate his crimes by a painful and protracted death.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DUKE OF VENICE.

BRABANTIO, a senator.

TWO OTHER SENATORS.

GRATIANO, brother to Brabantio.

LODOVICO, kinsman to Brabantio.

OTHELLO, the Moor.

CASSIO, his lieutenant.

IAGO, his ancient.

RODERIGO, a Venetian gentleman.

MONTANO, Othello's predecessor in the government of Cyprus.

CLOWN, servant to Othello.

HERALD.

DESDEMONA, daughter to Brabantio, and wife to Othello.

EMILIA, wife to Iago.

BIANCA, a courtesan, mistress to Cassio.

Officers, Gentlemen, Messengers, Musicians, Sailors, Attendants, &c.

SCENE, for the first act, in Venice; during the rest of the play, at a sea-port in Cyprus.

OTHELLO,
THE MOOR OF VENICE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Venice. A street.

Enter RODERIGO and IAGO.

Ro. Tush, never tell me; I take it much unkindly,
That thou, Iago,—who hast had my purse,
As if the strings were thine,—shouldst know of
this.

Iago. 'Sblood, but you will not hear me:
If ever I did dream of such a matter, abhor me.

Ro. Thou told'st me, thou didst hold him in thy
hate.

Iago. Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones
of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Oft capp'd¹ to him; and, by the faith of man,

¹ To cap means to salute by taking off the cap.

I know my price ; I am worth no worse a place :
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance,¹
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war ;
And, in conclusion, nonsuits
My mediators : ' For, certes,'² says he,
' I have already chose my officer.'
And what was he ?
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife ;³
' That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster ; unless the bookish theorick,
Wherein the toged consuls⁴ can propose
As masterly as he : mere prattle, without practice,
Is all his soldiership. But, he, sir, had the election :
And I,—of whom his eyes had seen the proof
At Rhodes, at Cyprus ; and on other grounds
Christian and heathen,—must be be-lee'd and
calm'd
By debtor and creditor, this counter-caster :⁵
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
And I, (God bless the mark !) his Moorship's an-
cient.

¹ Circumlocution.

² Certainly.

³ ' i. e. not yet completely damned, because not yet absolutely married to Bianca.'—Steevens.

⁴ The senators habited in their gowns.

⁵ It was anciently the practice to reckon up sums with counters.

Ro. By heaven, I rather would have been his hangman.

Iago. But there's no remedy; 'tis the curse of service :

Preferment goes by letter¹ and affection,
Not by the old gradation, where each second
Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
Whether I in any just term am affined²
To love the Moor.

Ro. I would not follow him then.

Iago. O, sir, content you ;
I follow him to serve my turn upon him :
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,
For naught but provender; and, when he's old,
cashier'd :

Whip me such honest knaves : others there are,
Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves ;
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them ; and, when they have lined
their coats,

Do themselves homage : these fellows have some
soul ;

¹ Recommendation from powerful friends.

² Bound by ties of affinity.

And such a one do I profess myself:

For, sir,

It is as sure as you are Roderigo,

Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago.

In following him, I follow but myself:

Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,

But seeming so, for my peculiar end:

For when my outward action doth demonstrate

The native act and figure of my heart

In compliment extern, 'tis not long after

But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve

For doves to peck at: I am not what I am.

Ro. What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe,¹
If he can carry 't thus!

Iago. Call up her father;
Rouse him; make after him; poison his delight;
Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen;
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on 't,
As it may lose some color.

Ro. Here is her father's house; I'll call aloud.

Iago. Do; with like timorous accent, and dire
yell,

As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

Ro. What ho! Brabantio! signior Brabantio,
ho!

¹ *POSSUMS.*

Iago. Awake! what, ho! Brabantio! thieves!
thieves! thieves!
Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags!
Thieves! thieves!

BRABANTIO, above, at a window.

Bra. What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

Ro. Signior, is all your family within?

Iago. Are your doors lock'd?

Bra. Why? wherefore ask you this?

Iago. Zounds, sir, you are robb'd: for shame;
put on your gown;

Your heart is burst; you have lost half your soul;
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you:
Arise, I say.

Bra. What, have you lost your wits?

Ro. Most reverend signior, do you know my
voice?

Bra. Not I: what are you?

Ro. My name is Roderigo.

Bra. The worse welcome:
I have charged thee, not to haunt about my doors:
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say,
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,
Being full of supper and distempering draughts,
Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come

To start my quiet.

Ro. Sir, sir, sir, sir,——

Bra. But thou must needs be sure,
My spirit and my place have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.

Ro. Patience, good sir.

Bra. What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is
Venice:

My house is not a grange.¹

Ro. Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

Iago. Zounds, sir, you are one of those that will
not serve God if the devil bid you. Because we
come to do you service, you think we are ruffians:
you'll have your daughter covered with a Barbary
horse; you'll have your nephews² neigh to you;
you'll have coursers for cousins, and gennets for
germans.

Bra. What profane wretch art thou?

Iago. I am one, sir, that comes to tell you, your
daughter and the Moor are now making the beast
with two backs.

Bra. Thou art a villain.

Iago. You are—a senator.

Bra. This thou shalt answer: I know thee,
Roderigo.

Ro. Sir, I will answer any thing: but I beseech
you,

¹ A lone farm-house.

² Grandsons.

If't be your pleasure, and most wise consent,
(As partly, I find, it is) that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even¹ and dull watch o' the night,
'Transported with no worse nor better guard,
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor;—
If this be known to you and your allowance,
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;
But, if you know not this, my manners tell me,
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe,
That, from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence.
Your daughter, if you have not given her leave,
I say again, hath made a gross revolt;
Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes,
In an extravagant² and wheeling stranger,
Of here and every where. Straight satisfy your-
self:

If she be in her chamber or your house,
Let loose on me the justice of the state
For thus deluding you.

Bra. Strike on the tinder, ho!
Give me a taper; call up all my people:
This accident is not unlike my dream;
Belief of it oppresses me already.

Light, I say! light! [Exit, from above.

Iago. Farewell; for I must leave you.

¹ The interval between twelve at night and one in the morning.

² Wandering

It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
To be produced (as, if I stay, I shall)
Against the Moor: for, I do know, the state,—
However this may gall him with some check,—
Cannot with safety cast¹ him; for he's embark'd
With such loud reason to the Cyprus' wars,
(Which even now stand in act) that, for their souls,
Another of his fathom they have none,
To lead their business: in which regard,
Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,
Yet, for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag and sign of love,
Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely
find him,
Lead to the Sagittary the raised search,
And there will I be with him. So farewell. [*Exit.*]

Enter, below, BRABANTIO, and Servants with torches.

Bra. It is too true an evil: gone she is;
And what's to come of my despised time
Is naught but bitterness.—Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her?—O unhappy girl!—
With the Moor, say'st thou?—Who would be a fa-
ther?—
How didst thou know 'twas she?—O, thou deceivest
me
Past thought!—What said she to you?—Get more
tapers;

¹ Dismiss.

Raise all my kindred.—Are they married, think you ?

Ro. Truly, I think they are.

Bra. O heaven !—How got she out ?—O treason
of the blood !

Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act.—Is there not charms,
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abused ? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing ?

Ro. Yes, sir ; I have, indeed.

Bra. Call up my brother.—O, that you had had
her !—

Some one way, some another.—Do you know
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor ?

Ro. I think I can discover him, if you please
To get good guard, and go along with me.

Bra. Pray you, lead on. At every house I'll
call ;

I may command at most.—Get weapons, ho !
And raise some special officers of night.—
On, good Roderigo ; I'll deserve your pains.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The same. Another street.

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Attendants.

Iago. Though in the trade of war I have slain
men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff o' the conscience,
To do no contrived murder : I lack iniquity

Sometimes to do me service: nine or ten times
I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the
 ribs.

Oth. 'Tis better as it is.

Iago. Nay, but he prated,
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against your honor,
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray, sir,
Are you fast married? for, be sure of this;—
That the magnifico¹ is much beloved;
And hath, in his effect, a voice potential
As double as the duke's: he will divorce you:
Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
The law (with all his might to enforce it on)
Will give him cable.

Oth. Let him do his spite :
My services, which I have done the signiory,
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know,
(Which, when I know that boasting is an honor,
I shall promulgate) I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege ;² and my demerits³
May speak, unbonneted, to as proud a fortune
As this that I have reach'd : for know, Iago,
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused free condition
Put into circumscription and confine

' The title of a senator.

5 Men who have sat on royal thrones.

¹ Demerits has the same meaning in Shakspeare as merta.

For the sea's worth. But, look : what lights come
yonder ?

*Enter CASSIO, at a distance, and certain Officers with
torches.*

Iago. These are the raised father and his friends :
You were best go in.

Oth. Not I : I must be found :
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they ?

Iago. By Janus, I think no.

Oth. The servants of the duke, and my lieu-
tenant.

The goodness of the night upon you, friends !
What is the news ?

Cas. The duke does greet you, general ;
And he requires your haste, post-haste appearance.
Even on the instant.

Oth. What is the matter, think you ?

Cas. Something from Cyprus, as I may divine ;
It is a business of some heat : the galleys
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers
This very night, at one another's heels ;
And many of the consuls, raised and met,
Are at the duke's already. You have been hotly
call'd for ;

When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The senate hath sent about three several quests
To search you out.

Oth. 'Tis well I am found by you.

I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you. [*Erit.*

Cas. Ancient, what makes he here?

Iago. Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land ca-
rack ;¹

If it prove lawful prize, he 's made for ever.

Cas. I do not understand.

Iago. He 's married.

Cas. To who?

Re-enter OTHELLO.

Iago. Marry, to——Come, captain, will you go?

Oth. Have with you.

Cas. Here comes another troop to seek for you.

Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and *Officers of night,*
with torches and weapons.

Iago. It is Brabantio : general, be advised ;
He comes to bad intent.

Oth. Holla ! stand there !

Ro. Signior, it is the Moor.

Bra. Down with him, thief !
[*they draw on both sides.*]

Iago. You, Roderigo ! come, sir, I am for you.

Oth. Keep up your bright swords, for the dew
will rust them.—

Good signior, you shall more command with years

¹ A vessel of great bulk and value.

Than with your weapons.

Bra. O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd
my daughter?

Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her :
For I'll refer me to all things of sense,
If she in chains of magic were not bound ;—
Whether a maid, so tender, fair, and happy ;
So opposite to marriage, that she shunn'd
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation ;—
Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou ; to fear,¹ not to delight.
Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense,
'That thou hast practised on her with foul charms ;
Abused her delicate youth with drugs or minerals,
That waken motion :—I'll have it disputed on.
'Tis probable, and palpable to thinking :
I therefore apprehend and do attach thee,
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of arts inhibited and out of warrant.—
Lay hold upon him ; if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.

Oth. Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining, and the rest :
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter.—Where will you that I go
To answer this your charge?

Era. To prison ; till fit time

¹ To terrify.

Of law, and course of direct session,
Call thee to answer.

Uth. What if I do obey?
How may the duke be therewith satisfied:
Whose messengers are here about my side.
Upon some present business of the statè,
'To bring me to him?

Off. 'Tis true, most worthy signior;
The duke's in council; and your noble self,
I am sure, is sent for.

Bra. How? the duke in council?
In this time of the night?—Bring him away:
Mine's not an idle cause: the duke himself,
Or any of my brothers of the state,
Cannot but feel this wrong as 'twere their own.
For if such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The same. A council-chamber.

The DUKE and SENATORS sitting at a table; Officers attending.

Duke. There is no composition¹ in these news,
That gives them credit.

1 Sen. Indeed, they are disproportion'd:
My letters say, a hundred and seven galleys.

¹ Consistency.

Duke. And mine, a hundred and forty.

2 Sen. And mine, two hundred :

But though they jump not on a just account,
(As in these cases, where the aim¹ reports,
'Tis oft with difference) yet do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

Duke. Nay, it is possible enough to judgment :
I do not so secure me in the error,
But the main article I do approve
In fearful sense.

Sail. [*within.*] What ho ! what ho ! what ho !

Enter an OFFICER with a SAILOR.

Off. A messenger from the galleys.

Duke. Now, what's the business ?

Sail. The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes :
So was I bid report here to the state
By signior Angelo.

Duke. How say you by this change ?

1 Sen. This cannot be,

By no assay of reason ; 'tis a pageant,
To keep us in false gaze. When we consider
The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk ;
And let ourselves again but understand,
That, as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,
So may he with more facile question² bear it,
For that it stands not in such warlike brace,³

¹ Conjecture.

² Less opposition.

³ State of defence.

But altogether lacks the abilities
That Rhodes is dress'd in ;—if we make thought of
this,

We must not think the Turk is so unskilful,
'To leave that latest which concerns him first ;
Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain,
To wake and wage a danger profitless.

Duke. Nay, in all confidence, he's not for
Rhodes.

Off. Here is more news.

Enter MESSENGER.

Mes. The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
Steering with due course toward the isle of Rhodes,
Have there injointed them with an after fleet.

I Sea. Ay, so I thought.—How many, as you
guess ?

Mes. Of thirty sail ; and now do they restem
Their backward course, bearing with frank appear-

toward Cyprus.—Signior Montano,
I most valiant servitor,
uty, recommends you thus,
to believe him.

ertain then for Cyprus.—
sé, is he not in town ?
now in Florence.

from us ; wish him post, post-haste :
tch.

comes Brabantio and the valiant Moor.

Enter BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, IAGO, RODRIGO, and
Officers.

Duke. Valiant Othello, we must straight employ
you
Against the general enemy Ottoman.—
I did not see you ; welcome, gentle signior :

[*to Brabantio.*]

We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.

Bra. So did I yours. Good your grace, pardon
me ;

Neither my place, nor aught I heard of business,
Hath raised me from my bed ; nor doth the general
care

Take hold on me : for my particular grief
Is of so floodgate and o'erbearing nature,
That it engulfs and swallows other sorrows,
And it is still itself.

Duke. Why, what's the matter ?

Bra. My daughter ! O, my daughter !

Sen. Dead ?

Bra. Ay, to me

She is abused, stolen from me, and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks :
For nature so preposterously to err,
Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,
Sans ' witchcraft could not——

' Without.

Duke. Whoe'er he be, that in this foul proceeding,

Hath thus beguiled your daughter of herself,
And you of her;—the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter,
After your own sense; yea, though our proper son
Stood in your action.¹

Bra. Humbly I thank your grace.
Here is the man, this Moor; whom now, it seems,
Your special mandate, for the state affairs,
Hath hither brought.

Duke and Sen. We are very sorry for it.

Duke. What, in your own part, can you say to
this? [to Othello.

Bra. Nothing, but this is so.

Oth. Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approved good masters,—
'That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her:
'The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my
speech.

And little bless'd with the set phrase of peace;
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have used
Their dearest action² in the tented field;
And little of this great world can I speak

¹ Charge, accusation.

² Best exertion.

More than pertains to feats of broil and battle,
And therefore little shall I grace my cause,
In speaking for myself: yet, by your gracious pa-
tience,

I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what
charms,

What conjuration, and what mighty magic,
(For such proceeding I am charged withal)
I won his daughter.

Bra. A maiden never bold.
Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
Blush'd at herself: and she,—in spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, every thing,—
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on?
It is a judgment maim'd and most imperfect,
That will confess, perfection so could err
Against all rules of nature; and must be driven
To find out practices of cunning hell,
Why this should be. I therefore vouch again,
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjured to this effect,
He wrought upon her.

Duke. To vouch this is no proof,
Without more certain and more overt test,¹
Than these thin habits, and poor likelihoods
Of modern seeming,² do prefer against him.

I Sen. But, Othello, speak;—

¹ Open proof.

² Of weak show

Did you by indirect and forced courses
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?
Or came it by request, and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth?

Oth. I do beseech you,
Send for the lady to the Sagittary,
And let her speak of me before her father:
If you do find me foul in her report;
The trust, the office I do hold of you,
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even fall upon my life.

Duke. Fetch Desdemona hither.

Oth. Ancient, conduct them; you best know the
place. [*Exeunt Iago and Attendants.*]
And, till she come, as truly as to heaven
I do confess the vices of my blood,
So justly to your grave ears I'll present
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,
And she in mine.

Duke. Say it, Othello.

Oth. Her father loved me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year; the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have pass'd.
I ran it through, even from my boyish days,
To the very moment that he bade me tell it:
Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents, by flood and field;
Of hair-breadth scapes i' the imminent deadly
breach;
Of being taken by the insolent foe,

And sold to slavery ; of my redemption thence,
And portance ¹ in my travels' history :
Wherein of antres ² vast, and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch
heaven,

It was my hint to speak, such was the process ;
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. These things to
hear.

Would Desdemona seriously incline ;
But still the house affairs would draw her thence,
Which ever as she could with haste despatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse : which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour ; and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,
'That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intentively : ³ I did consent ;
And often did beguile her of her tears,
When I did speak of some distressful stroke,
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs :
She swore,—In faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing
strange ;
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful ;

¹ Behavior.

² Caves.

³ For attentively, i. e. with attention to all its parts.

She wish'd she had not heard it ; yet she wish'd
That Heaven had made her such a man : she thank'd
me ;

And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint, I spake :
She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd,
And I loved her that she did pity them.
'This only is the witchcraft I have used :
Here comes the lady ; let her witness it.

Enter DESDEMONA, IAGO, and Attendants.

Duke. I think this tale would win my daughter
too.—

Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best :
Men do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands.

Bra. I pray you, hear her speak :
If she confess that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head, if my bad blame
Light on the man !—Come hither, gentle mistress :
Do you perceive, in all this noble company,
Where most you owe obedience ?

Des. My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty :
To you I am bound for life and education ;
My life and education both do learn me
How to respect you : you are the lord of duty ;
I am hitherto your daughter : but here's my hus-
band ;

And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father ;
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord.

Bra. God be with you ! I have done.—
Please it your grace, on to the state affairs :
I had rather to adopt a child than get it.—
Come hither, Moor :
I here do give thee that with all my heart,
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee.—For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child ;
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them.—I have done, my lord.

Duke. Let me speak like yourself ; and lay a sentence,
Which, as a grise,¹ or step, may help these lovers
Into your favor.
When remedies are past the griefs are ended,
By seeing the worst which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone,
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
What cannot be preserved when Fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mockery makes.
The robb'd that smiles steals something from the
thief :
He robs himself, that spends a bootless grief.

Bra. So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile ;
We lose it not so long as we can smile.

He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence ~~he~~
hears ;

But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.
These sentences, to sugar or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal :
But words are words ; I never yet did hear,
That the bruised heart was pierced through the
ear.—

I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of
state.

Duke. The Turk with a most mighty preparation
makes for Cyprus. Othello, the fortitude of the
place is best known to you : and though we have
there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet
opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a
more safer voice on you : you must therefore ~~be~~
content to slubber¹ the gloss of your new fortunes
with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

Oth. The tyrant custom, most grave senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down. I do agnize²
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness ; and do undertake
These present wars against the Ottomites.
Most humbly therefore bending to your state,
I crave fit disposition for my wife ;

¹ Obscure.

² Acknowledge.

SCENE III. THE MOOR OF VENICE.

Due reference of place and exhibition.¹
With such accommodation and besort,²
As levels with her breeding.

Duke. If you please,
Be 't at her father's.

Bra. I 'll not have it so.

Oth. Nor I.

Des. Nor I: I would not there reside,
To put my father in impatient thoughts,
By being in his eye.—Most gracious duke,
To my unfolding lend a gracious ear;
And let me find a charter in your voice
To assist my simpleness.

Duke. What would you, Desdemona?

Des. That I did love the Moor to live with him.
My downright violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world: my heart's subdued
Even to the very quality³ of my lord.
I saw Othello's visage in his mind;
And to his honors, and his valiant parts,
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate;
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
A moth of peace, and he go to the war;—
'The rites, for which I love him, are bereft me,
And I a heavy interim shall support
By his dear absence. Let me go with him.

Oth. Your voices, lords: 'beseech you, let her
will

¹ Pecuniary allowance.

² Attendance.

³ Quality here means profession, i. e. the life of a soldier.

Have a free way.

Vouch with me, Heaven, I therefore beg it not,

To please the palate of my appetite ;

Nor to comply with heat, the young affects,¹

In my disjunct and proper satisfaction ;

But to be free and bounteous to her mind :

And Heaven defend² your good souls, that you
think

I will your serious and great business scant,

For³ she is with me. No : when light-wing'd toys

Of feather'd Cupid seel⁴ with wanton dulness

My speculative and active instruments,

That my disports corrupt and taint my business ;—

Let housewives make a skillet⁵ of my helm,

And all indign and base adversities

Make head against my estimation !

Duke. Be it as you shall privately determine,
Either for her stay or going : the affair cries—haste,
And speed must answer it : you must hence to-
night.

Des. To-night, my lord ?

Duke. This night.

Oth. With all my heart.

Duke. At nine i' the morning here we'll meet
again.

Othello, leave some officer behind,

And he shall our commission bring to you ;

¹ For affections.

² Forbid.

³ Because.

⁴ Blind.

⁵ A small kettle.

With such things else of quality and respect,
As doth import you.

Oth. Please your grace, my ancient;
A man he is of honesty and trust:
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful your good grace shall think
To be sent after me.

Duke. Let it be so.—
Good night to every one: and, noble signior,
[to *Brabantio*.

If virtue no delighted¹ beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

1 Sen. Adieu, brave Moor! use Desdemona well.

Bra. Look to her, Moor; have a quick eye to
see:

She has deceived her father, and may thee.

[*Exeunt Duke, Senators, Officers, &c.*

Oth. My life upon her faith.—Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee:
I pr'ythee, let thy wife attend on her;
And bring them after in the best advantage.—
Come, Desdemona; I have but an hour
Of love, of worldly matters and direction,
To spend with thee: we must obey the time.

[*Exeunt Othello and Desdemona*.

Ro. Iago.

Iago. What sayest thou, noble heart?

Ro. What will I do, thinkest thou?

¹ For delighting.

Iago. Why, go to bed, and sleep.

Ro. I will incontinently¹ drown myself.

Iago. Well, if thou dost, I shall never love thee after it. Why, thou silly gentleman!

Ro. It is silliness to live, when to live is a torment; and then have we a prescription to die, when death is our physician.

Iago. O villanous! I have looked upon the world for four times seven years; and since I could distinguish between a benefit and an injury, I never found a man that knew how to love himself. Ere I would say I would drown myself for the love of a Guinea-hen,² I would change my humanity with a baboon.

Ro. What should I do? I confess it is my shame to be so fond, but it is not in virtue to amend it.

Iago. Virtue? a fig! 'tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners: so that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce; set hyssop, and weed up thyme; supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many; either to have it steril with idleness or manured with industry; why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills. If the balance of our lives had not one scale of reason to poize another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions: but we have reason, to con-

¹ Immediately.

² A cant term for a wanton.

our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts; whereof I take this, that you call love, to be a sect¹ or scion.

Ro. It cannot be.

Iago. It is merely a lust of the blood, and a permission of the will. Come, be a man. Drown thyself? drown cats and blind puppies. I have professed me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness: I could never better stead thee than now.² Put money in thy purse; follow these wars; defeat thy favor with a usurped beard:³ I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be, that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor;—put money in thy purse;—nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration;—put but money in thy purse. These Moors are changeable in their wills;—fill thy purse with money: the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida. She must change for youth: when she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice: she must have change; she must: therefore put money in thy purse. If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning:—make all the money thou canst. If sanctimony and a frail vow, betwixt an erring³ barbarian

¹ A cutting.

² Change your countenance with a false beard.

³ Wandering.

and a supersubtle Venetian, be not too hard for my wits, and all the tribe of hell, thou shalt enjoy her; therefore make money. A pox of drowning thyself! it is clean out of the way: seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy, than to be drowned and go without her.

Ro. Wilt thou be fast to my hopes if I depend on the issue?

Iago. Thou art sure of me;—go, make money. I have told thee often, and I retell thee again and again, I hate the Moor: my cause is hearted; thine hath no less reason. Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him: if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, and me a sport. There are many events in the womb of time, which will be delivered. Traverse; go; provide thy money. We will have more of this to-morrow. Adieu.

Ro. Where shall we meet i' the morning?

Iago. At my lodging.

Ro. I'll be with thee betimes.

Iago. Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

Ro. What say you?

Iago. No more of drowning; do you hear?

Ro. I am changed: I'll sell all my land.

Iago. Go to; farewell: put money enough in your purse. *[Exit Roderigo.]*

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse:

For I mine own gain'd knowlege should profane,

If I would time expend with such a snipe,

But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor;

And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets

He has done my office : I know not, if 't be true ;
But I. for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do, as if for surety. He holds ¹ me well ;
The better shall my purpose work on him.
Cassio 's a proper man : let me see now ;
To get his place, and to plume up my will ;—
A double knavery ;—how ? how ?—Let me see.—
After some time, to abuse Othello's ear,
That he is too familiar with his wife.—
He hath a person, and a smooth dispose,
To be suspected ; framed to make women false.
The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so ;
And will as tenderly be led by the nose,
As asses are.
I have 't : it is engender'd.—Hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's
light. [Exit.

A C T I I.

SCENE I.

A sea-port town in Cyprus. A platform.

Enter MONTANO and TWO GENTLEMEN.

Mon. What from the cape can you discern at
sea ?

¹ Esteems.

1 *Gen.* Nothing at all: it is a high-wrought flood.

I cannot, 'twixt the haven and the main,
Descry a sail.

Mon. Methinks, the wind hath spoke aloud at land;

A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements:
If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,
Can hold the mortise? What shall we hear of this?

2 *Gen.* A segregation of the Turkish fleet:
For do but stand upon the foaming shore.
The chiding billow seems to pelt the clouds;
The wind-shaked surge, with high and monstrous main,

Seems to cast water on the burning bear,
And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole:¹
I never did like molestation view
On the enchafed flood.

Mon. If that the Turkish fleet
Be not inshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd:
It is impossible they bear it out.

Enter THIRD GENTLEMAN.

3 *Gen.* News, lords! our wars are done;
The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks.
That their designment halts. A noble ship of
Venice

¹ The constellation Bootes, or Arctophylax.

Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance
On most part of their fleet.

Mon. How ! is this true ?

3 Gen. The ship is here put in,
A Veronese ; Michael Cassio,
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor, Othello,
Is come on shore : the Moor himself 's at sea,
And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

Mon. I am glad on 't ; 'tis a worthy governor.

3 Gen. But this same Cassio,—though he speak
of comfort,
Touching the Turkish loss,—yet he looks sadly,
And prays the Moor be safe ; for they were parted
With foul and violent tempest.

Mon. Pray Heaven he be ;
For I have served him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier. Let 's to the sea-side, ho !
As well to see the vessel that 's come in,
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello ;
Even till we make the main, and the aerial blue,
An indistinct regard.

3 Gen. Come, let 's do so ;
For every minute is expectancy
Of more arrivance.

Enter CASSIO.

Cas. Thanks to the valiant of this warlike isle,
That so approve the Moor : O, let the Heavens
Give him defence against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea !

Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round !

Des. I thank you, valiant Cassio.
What tidings can you tell me of my lord ?

Cas. He is not yet arrived : nor know I aught.
But that he 's well, and will be shortly here.

Des. O, but I fear :—how lost you company ?

Cas. The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship : but, hark ! a sail.

[*cry within, ' A sail, a sail ! ' Then guns heard.*

2 Gen. They give their greeting to the citadel :
This likewise is a friend.

Cas. See for the news.

[*Exit Gentleman.*

Good ancient, you are welcome ; welcome, mistress.

[*to Emilia.*

Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
That I extend my manners : 'tis my breeding
That gives me this bold show of courtesy.

[*kissing her.*

Iago. Sir, would she give you so much of her
lips,

As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
You 'd have enough.

Des. Alas, she has no speech.

Iago. In faith, too much :
I find it still, when I have list ¹ to sleep :
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,

¹ *Desire.*

She puts her tongue a little in her heart.
And chides with thinking.

Emil. You have little cause to say so.

Iago. Come on, come on; you are pictures out
of doors,

Bells in your parlours, wild cats in your kitchens,
Saints in your injuries, devils being offended,
Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your
beds.

Des. O, fie upon thee, slanderer!

Iago. Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk;
You rise to play, and go to bed to work.

Emil. You shall not write my praise.

Iago. No, let me not.

Des. What wouldst thou write of me if thou
shouldst praise me?

Iago. O gentle lady, do not put me to 't;
For I am nothing if not critical.¹

Des. Come on; assay.—There's one gone to the
harbor?

Iago. Ay, madam.

Des. I am not merry; but I do beguile
The thing I am, by seeming otherwise.—
Come, how wouldst thou praise me?

Iago. I am about it; but, indeed, my invention
Comes from my pate, as birdlime does from irize,
It plucks out brains and all: but my muse labors,
And thus she is deliver'd:—

¹ Censorious.

If she be fair and wise,—fairness and wit,—
The one's for use, the other useth it.

Des. Well praised! How if she be black and witty?

Iago. If she be black, and thereto have a wit;—

She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

Des. Worse and worse.

Emil. How, if fair and foolish?

Iago. She never yet was foolish that was fair;
For even her folly help'd her to an heir.

Des. These are old fond¹ paradoxes, to make
fools laugh i' the alehouse. What miserable praise
hast thou for her that's foul and foolish?

Iago. There's none so foul, and foolish there-
unto,

But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

Des. O heavy ignorance! thou praisest the worst
best. But what praise couldst thou bestow on a
deserving woman indeed? one, that, in the autho-
rity of her merit, did justly put on² the vouch of
very malice itself?

Iago. She that was ever fair, and never proud;
Had tongue at will, and yet was never loud;
Never lack'd gold, and yet went never gay;
Fled from her wish, and yet said,—'Now I may:'
She that, being anger'd, her revenge being nigh,
Bade her wrong stay, and her displeasure fly;

¹ Foolish.

² Challenge.

She that in wisdom never was so frail,
To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail,
She that could think, and ne'er disclose her mind;
See suitors following, and not look behind;—
She was a wight, if ever such wight were,——

Des. To do what?

Iago. To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer.

Des. O most lame and impotent conclusion!—
Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband.—How say you, Cassio? is he not a most profane and liberal¹ counsellor?

Cas. He speaks home, madam: you may relish him more in the soldier than in the scholar.

Iago. [*aside.*] He takes her by the palm: ay, well said; whisper: with as little a web as this will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio.—Ay, smile upon her, do; I will gyve² thee in thine own courtship. You say true; 'tis so, indeed: if such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kissed your three fingers so oft, which now again you are most apt to play the sir in.³ Very good; well kissed! an excellent courtesy! 'tis so, indeed. Yet again your fingers to your lips? would, they were clyster-pipes for your sake! —[*trumpet.*] The Moor; I know his trumpet.

Cas. 'Tis truly so.

Des. Let's meet him, and receive him.

¹ i. e. gross and licentious.

² Shackle.

³ i. e. to show your good breeding and gallantry.

Cas. Lo, where he comes !

Enter OTHELLO and Attendants.

Oth. O my fair warrior !

Des. My dear Othello !

Oth. It gives me wonder great as my content,
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy !
If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death !
And let the laboring bark climb hills of seas,
Olympus-high, and duck again as low
As hell 's from heaven. If it were now to die,
'Twere now to be most happy ; for, I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute,
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.

Des. The Heavens forbid,
But that our loves and comforts should increase,
Even as our days do grow !

Oth. Amen to that, sweet powers !—
I cannot speak enough of this content ;
It stops me here ; it is too much of joy :
And this, and this, the greatest discords be,
[kissing her.

That e'er our hearts shall make !

Iago. O, you are well tuned now !
But I 'll set down the pegs that make this music,
As honest as I am. [aside.

Oth. Come, let 's to the castle.—
News, friends ; our wars are done ; the 'Turks are
drown'd.—

100-1000 1000

1000 1000

1000 1000 1000 1000
1000 1000 1000 1000
1000 1000 1000 1000

How do our old acquaintance of this isle?—
Honey, you shall be well desired¹ in Cyprus:
I have found great love amongst them. O my
sweet,

I prattle out of fashion,² and I dote
In mine own comforts.—I pr'ythee, good Iago,
Go to the bay, and disembark my coffers:
Bring thou the master to the citadel;
He is a good one, and his worthiness
Does challenge much respect.—Come, Desdemona,
Once more well met at Cyprus.

[*Exeunt Othello, Desdemona, and Attendants.*]

Iago. Do thou meet me presently at the harbor.
Come hither. If thou be'st valiant, as (they say)
base men, being in love, have then a nobility in
their natures more than is native to them,—list me.
The lieutenant to-night watches on the court of
guard.—First, I must tell thee this;—Desdemona is
directly in love with him.

Ro. With him? why, 'tis not possible.

Iago. Lay thy finger thus, and let thy soul be
instructed. Mark me with what violence she first
loved the Moor, but for bragging and telling her
fantastical lies: and will she love him still for
prating? Let not thy discreet heart think it. Her
eye must be fed; and what delight shall she have
to look on the devil? When the blood is made dull

Much solicited by invitation.

² Without method.

with the act of sport, there should be,—again to inflame it, and to give satiety a fresh appetite.—loveliness in favor; sympathy in years, manners, and beauties; all which the Moor is defective in. Now, for want of these required conveniences, her delicate tenderness will find itself abused, begin to heave the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor: very Nature will instruct her in it, and compel her to some second choice. Now, sir, this granted, (as it is a most pregnant¹ and unforced position) who stands so eminently in the degree of this fortune as Cassio does? a knave very voluble; no farther conscionable, than in putting on the mere form of civil and humane seeming for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden loose affection? why, none; why, none: a slippery and subtle knave: a finder out of occasions; that has an eye can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true advantage never present itself: a devilish knave! besides, the knave is handsome, young; and hath all those requisites in him, that folly and green minds look after: a pestilent complete knave; and the woman nath found him already.

Ro. I cannot believe that in her; she is full of most blessed condition.²

Iago. Blessed fig's end! the wine she drinks is made of grapes: if she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor: blessed pudding! Didst

¹ Evident.

² Disposition.

thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? didst not mark that?

Ro. Yes, that I did; but that was but courtesy.

Iago. Lechery, by this hand; an index and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips, that their breaths embraced together. Villanous thoughts, Roderigo! when these mutualities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, the incorporate conclusion: pish!—but, sir, be you ruled by me: I have brought you from Venice. Watch you to-night; for the command, I'll lay 't upon you: Cassio knows you not;—I'll not be far from you: do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline; or from what other course you please, which the time shall more favorably minister.

Ro. Well.

Iago. Sir, he is rash, and very sudden in choler; and, haply, with his truncheon may strike at you: provoke him, that he may; for, even out of that, will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny; whose qualification shall come into no true taste again,¹ but by the displanting of Cassio: so shall you have a shorter journey to your desires, by the means I shall then have to prefer them; and the impediment

¹ : i. e. whose resentment shall not be so qualified or tempered, as not to retain some bitterness.'—Johnson.

most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

Ro. I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

Iago. I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel: I must fetch his necessaries ashore. Farewell.

Ro. Adieu.

[*Exit.*

Iago. That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it; That she loves him, 'tis apt, and of great credit: 'The Moor,—howbeit that I endure him not,— Is of a constant, loving, noble nature; And, I dare think, he 'll prove to Desdemona A most dear husband. Now I do love her too; Not out of absolute lust, (though, peradventure, I stand accountant for as great a sin) But partly led to diet my revenge, For that I do suspect the lusty Moor Hath leap'd into my seat; the thought whereof Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards; And nothing can or shall content my soul, Till I am even with him, wife for wife; Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor At least into a jealousy so strong 'That judgment cannot cure: which thing to do,— If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trash¹ For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,

¹ To trash signifies to place a stone on a hound's neck to prevent him from outstripping his companions.

I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip;¹
Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb,²—
For I fear Cassio with my night-cap too;
Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,
For making him egregiously an ass,
And practising upon his peace and quiet
Even to madness. 'Tis here, but yet confused:
Knavery's plain face is never seen till used. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A street.

Enter HERALD, with a proclamation; people following.

Her. It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere³ perdition of the Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph; some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him; for, besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptials: so much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices⁴ are open; and there is full liberty of feasting, from this present hour of five, till the bell hath told eleven. Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus, and our noble general, Othello!

[*Exeunt*

¹ In allusion to the practice of wrestlers.

² In the grossest manner.

³ Intire.

⁴ Rooms in the castle.

SCENE III.

A hall in the castle.

Enter OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, CASSIO, *and Attendants.*

Oth. Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night :

Let's teach ourselves that honorable stop,
Not to outsport discretion.

Cas. Iago hath direction what to do ;
But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye
Will I look to 't.

Oth. Iago is most honest.
Michael, good night : to-morrow, with our earliest,
Let me have speech with you.—Come, my dear
love ;

The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue ;
[*to Desdemona.*

That profit's yet to come 'twixt me and you.—
Good night. [*Exeunt Oth. Des. and Attend.*

Enter IAGO.

Cas. Welcome, Iago : we must to the watch.

Iago. Not this hour, lieutenant ; 'tis not yet ten o'clock : our general cast's us thus early for the love of his Desdemona ; whom let us not therefore blame : he hath not yet made wanton the night with her ; and she is sport for Jove.

! Dismissed.

Cas. She's a most exquisite lady.

Iago. And, I'll warrant her, full of game.

Cas. Indeed, she is a most fresh and delicate creature.

Iago. What an eye she has! Methinks, it sounds a parley of provocation.

Cas. An inviting eye; and yet, methinks, right modest.

Iago. And, when she speaks, is it not an alarm to love?

Cas. She is, indeed, perfection.

Iago. Well, happiness to their sheets! Come, lieutenant, I have a stoop of wine; and here without are a brace of Cyprus gallants, that would fain have a measure to the health of the black Othello.

Cas. Not to-night, good Iago; I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking: I could well wish courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

Iago. O, they are our friends; but one cup: I'll drink for you.

Cas. I have drunk but one cup to-night. and that was craftily qualified¹ too, and, behold, what innovation it makes here: I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

Iago. What, man! 'tis a night of revels: the gallants desire it.

¹ Slyly mixed with water.

Cas. Where are they?

Iago. Here at the door; I pray you, call them in.

Cas. I'll do't; but it dislikes me. [*Exit Cassio.*]

Iago. If I can fasten but one cup upon him,
With that which he hath drunk to-night already,
He'll be as full of quarrel and offence
As my young mistress' dog. Now, my sick fool,
Roderigo,
Whom love has turn'd almost the wrong side out-
ward,

To Desdemona hath to-night caroused
Potations pottle deep; and he's to watch:
Three lads of Cyprus,—noble swelling spirits,
That hold their honors in a wary distance,
The very elements of this warlike isle,—
Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups;
And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of
drunkards,
Am I to put our Cassio in some action
That may offend the isle:—but here they come.
If consequence do but approve my dream,
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

Re-enter CASSIO; with him MONTANO and Gentlemen.

Cas. Fore heaven, they have given me a rouse¹
already.

Mon. Good faith, a little one; not past a pint, as
I am a soldier.

¹ A jovial draught.

Iago. Some wine, ho!

‘ And let me the canakin clink, clink ; [*sings.*
And let me the canakin clink :
A soldier’s a man ;
A life’s but a span ;
Why then let a soldier drink.’

Some wine, boys ! [*wine brought in.*

Cas. Fore heaven, an excellent song.

Iago. I learned it in England, where, indeed, they are most potent in potting : your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander,—drink, ho!—are nothing to your English.

Cas. Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking ?

Iago. Why, he drinks you, with facility, your Dane dead drunk ; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain ; he gives your Hollander a vomit, ere the next pottle can be filled.

Cas. To the health of our general.

Mon. I am for it, lieutenant ; and I’ll do you justice.

Iago. O sweet England !

‘ King Stephen was a worthy peer ;¹
His breeches cost him but a crown :
He held them sixpence all too dear ;
With that he call’d the tailor lown.

¹ i. e. a worthy fellow.

‘ He was a wight of high renown,
And thou art but of low degree :
’Tis pride that pulls the country down ;
Then take thine auld cloak about thee.’

Some wine, ho !

Cas. Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.

Iago. Will you hear it again ?

Cas. No ; for I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things.—Well, Heaven’s above all ; and there be souls that must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

Iago. It’s true, good lieutenant.

Cas. For mine own part,—no offence to the general, nor any man of quality,—I hope to be saved.

Iago. And so do I too, lieutenant.

Cas. Ay, but, by your leave, not before me ; the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient. Let’s have no more of this ; let’s to our affairs.—Forgive us our sins !—Gentlemen, let’s look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk : this is my ancient ;—this is my right hand, and this is my left hand :—I am not drunk now ; I can stand well enough, and speak well enough.

All. Excellent well.

Cas. Why, very well, then : you must not think then that I am drunk. [*Exit.*

Mon. To the platform, masters ; come, let’s set the watch.

Iago. You see this fellow, that is gone before:
He is a soldier, fit to stand by Cæsar,
And give direction; and do but see his vice:
'Tis to his virtue a just equinox,
The one as long as the other: 'tis pity of him.
I fear, the trust Othello puts him in,
On some odd time of his infirmity,
Will shake this island.

Mon. But is he often thus?

Iago. 'Tis evermore the prologue to his sleep:
He'll watch the horologe a double set,¹
If drink rock not his cradle.

Mon. It were well,
The general were put in mind of it.
Perhaps, he sees it not; or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,
And looks not on his evils: is not this true?

Enter RODERIGO.

Iago. How now, Roderigo? *[aside.*
I pray you, after the lieutenant; go.

[Exit Roderigo.

Mon. And 'tis great pity, that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place, as his own second,
With one of an ingraft infirmity:
It were an honest action, to say
So to the Moor.

¹ i. e. he will keep awake while the clock strikes two rounds, or four and twenty hours

Iago. Not I, for this fair island :
I do love Cassio well ; and would do much
To cure him of this evil. But, hark ! what noise !
[*cry within, — ' Help ! help ! '*

Re-enter CASSIO, driving in RODERIGO.

Cas. You rogue ! you rascal !

Mon. What's the matter, lieutenant ?

Cas. A knave !—teach me my duty !
I'll beat the knave into a twiggen¹ bottle.

Ro. Beat me !

Cas. Dost thou prate, rogue ?

[*striking Roderigo.*

Mon. Nay, good lieutenant ;
[*staying him.*

I pray you, sir, hold your hand.

Cas. Let me go, sir,
Or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.

Mon. Come, come, you're drunk.

Cas. Drunk ! [they fight.

Iago. Away, I say ! go out, and cry—a mutiny.
[*aside to Roderigo, who goes out*

Nay, good lieutenant ;—alas, gentlemen ;—

Help, ho !—Lieutenant,—sir,—Montano,—sir ;—

Help, masters !—Here's a goodly watch, indeed !

[*bell rings.*

Who's that that rings the bell ?—Diablo, ho !

¹ Wicker.

'The town will rise : God's will, lieutenant ! hold ;
You will be shamed for ever.

Enter OTHELLO and Attendants.

Oth. What is the matter here ?

Mon. Zounds, I bleed still ; I am hurt to the death.

Oth. Hold, for your lives.

Iago. Hold, hold, lieutenant ;—sir ;—Montano ;—
gentlemen ;—

Have you forgot all sense of place and duty ?

Hold, hold ! the general speaks to you ; hold, for shame !

Oth. Why, how now, ho ! from whence ariseth this ?

Are we turn'd Turks ; and to ourselves do that,

Which Heaven hath forbid the Ottomites ?

For christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl :

He that stirs next to carve forth his own rage,

Holds his soul light ; he dies upon his motion.—

Silence that dreadful bell ; it frights the isle

From her propriety.—What is the matter, masters ?—

Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,

Speak, who began this ? on thy love, I charge thee.

Iago. I do not know ;—friends all but now, even
now,

In quarter,¹ and in terms like bride and groom

¹ On our station.

Devesting them for bed ; and then, but now,
(As if some planet had unwitting men)
Swords out, and tilting one at other's breast,
In opposition bloody. I cannot speak
Any beginning to this peevish odds ;
And would in action glorious I had lost
These legs, that brought me to a part of it !

Oth. How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot ?

Cas. I pray you, pardon me ; I cannot speak.

Oth. Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil :
The gravity and stillness of your youth
The world hath noted, and your name is great
In mouths of wisest censure :¹ what's the matter,
That you unlace your reputation thus,
And spend your rich opinion, for the name
Of a night-brawler ? give me answer to it.

Mon. Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger :
Your officer, Iago, can inform you,—
While I spare speech, which something now offends
me,—

Of all that I do know : nor know I aught
By me that's said or done amiss this night ;
Unless self-charity be sometime a vice ;
And to defend ourselves it be a sin,
When violence assails us.

Oth. Now, by heaven,
My blood begins my safer guides to rule ;

¹ Judgment.

And passion, having my best judgment collied,¹
Assays to lead the way : if I once stir,
Or do but lift this arm, the best of you
Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know
How this foul rout began, who set it on ;
And he that is approved² in this offence,
Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
Shall lose me.—What ! in a town of war,
Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,
To manage private and domestic quarrel,
In night, and on the court of guard and safety !
'Tis monstrous.—Iago, who began it ?

Mon. If partially affined,³ or leagued in office,
Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,
Thou art no soldier.

Iago. Touch me not so near :
I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth.
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio ;
Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth
Shall nothing wrong him.—Thus it is, general.
Montano and myself being in speech,
There comes a fellow, crying out for help ;
And Cassio following him with determined sword.
To execute upon him : Sir, this gentleman
Steps in to Cassio, and entreats his pause ;
Myself the crying fellow did pursue,
Lest, by his clamor, (as it so fell out)

¹ Darkened.

² Convicted by proof.

³ Related by nearness of office.

The town might fall in fright : he, swift of foot,
 Outran my purpose ; and I return'd the rather
 For that I heard the clink and fall of swords,
 And Cassio high in oath ; which, till to-night,
 I ne'er might say before : when I came back,
 (For this was brief) I found them close together,
 At blow and thrust ; even as again they were,
 When you yourself did part them.
 More of this matter can I not report :—
 But men are men ; the best sometimes forget :
 Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,—
 As men in rage strike those that wish them best.—
 Yet, surely, Cassio, I believe, received
 From him that fled some strange indignity,
 Which patience could not pass.

Oth. I know, Iago,
 Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
 Making it light to Cassio.—Cassio, I love thee :
 But never more be officer of mine.—

Enter DEEDEMONA, attended.

Look, if my gentle love be not raised up.
 I'll make thee an example.

Des. What's the matter, dear ?

Oth. All's well now, sweeting : come away to
 bed.

Des.

Your surgeon : lead him off.

[*to Montano, who is led off.*
 care about the town,

And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted.—
Come, Desdemona; 'tis the soldiers' life,
To have their balmy slumbers waked with strife.

[*Exeunt all but Iago and Cassio.*]

Iago. What, are you hurt, lieutenant?

Cas. Ay, past all surgery.

Iago. Marry, Heaven forbid!

Cas. Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I have lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal part, sir, of myself, and what remains is bestial.—My reputation, Iago, my reputation!

Iago. As I am an honest man, I thought you had received some bodily wound; there is more offence in that than in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most false imposition; oft got without merit, and lost without deserving: you have lost no reputation at all, unless you repute yourself such a loser. What, man! there are ways to recover the general again: you are but now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy than in malice; even so as one would beat his offenceless dog, to affright an imperious lion: sue to him again, and he's yours.

Cas. I will rather sue to be despised, than to deceive so good a commander with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? and speak parrot?² and squabble, swagger, swear, and discourse fustian with one's own shadow?—O thou

¹ Dismissed in his anger.

² Talk foolishly.

invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil!

Iago. What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

Cas. I know not.

Iago. Is it possible?

Cas. I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore.—O, that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

Iago. Why, but you are now well enough: how came you thus recovered?

Cas. It hath pleased the devil, drunkenness, to give place to the devil, wrath: one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

Iago. Come, you are too severe a moraler. As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

Cas. I will ask him for my place again; he shall tell me, I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! O strange! Every inordinate cup is unblessed, and the ingredient is a devil.

Iago. Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used; exclaim no more against

it. And, good lieutenant, I think, you think I love you.

Cas. I have well approved it, sir.—I drunk!

Iago. You or any man living may be drunk at some time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general:—I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement of her parts and graces. Confess yourself freely to her; importune her; she'll help to put you in your place again: she is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, that she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested. This broken joint, between you and her husband, entreat her to splinter; and, my fortunes against any lay¹ worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

Cas. You advise me well.

Iago. I protest, in the sincerity of love, and honest kindness.

Cas. I think it freely; and, betimes in the morning, I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me. I am desperate of my fortunes, if they check me here.

Iago. You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant; I must to the watch.

Cas. Good night, honest Iago. [Exit Cassio]

¹ Wager.

Iago. And what's he then, that says I play the villain ?

- When this advice is free I give, and honest,
Probal¹ to thinking, and, indeed, the course
To win the Moor again ? For 'tis most easy
The inclining Desdemona to subdue
In any honest suit ; she's framed as fruitful²
As the free elements : and then for her
To win the Moor,—were 't to renounce his baptism,
All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,—
His soul is so enfetter'd to her love,
That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
Even as her appetite shall play the god
With his weak function. How am I then a villain,
To counsel Cassio to this parallel course,
Directly to his good ? Divinity of hell !
When devils will their blackest sins put on,
They do suggest³ at first with heavenly shows,
As I do now : for while this honest fool
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes,
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor ;
I'll pour this pestilence into his ear ;—
That she repeals⁴ him for her body's lust ;
And, by how much she strives to do him good,
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.
So will I turn her virtue into pitch ;

¹ For probable.

² Tempt.

³ Liberal, bountiful.

⁴ Recalls.

And out of her own goodness make the net
That shall enmesh them all.—How now, Roderigo?

Enter RODERIGO.

Ro. I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is almost spent; I have been to-night exceedingly well cudgelled; and, I think, the issue will be, I shall have so much experience for my pains; and so, with no money at all, and a little more wit, return to Venice.

Iago. How poor are they that have not patience!

What wound did ever heal, but by degrees?
Thou know'st, we work by wit, and not by witchcraft;

And wit depends on dilatory time.
Does 't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee,
And thou, by that small hurt, hast cashier'd Cassio.
Though other things grow fair against the sun,
Yet fruits that blossom first will first be ripe.
Content thyself awhile.—By the mass, 'tis morning;
Pleasure and action make the hours seem short.—
Retire thee; go where thou art billeted:
Away, I say; thou shalt know more hereafter:
Nay, get thee gone. [*Exit Roderigo.*] Two things
are to be done;—

My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress;
I'll set her on:
Myself, the while, to draw the Moor apart,

And bring him jump¹ when he may Cassio find
Soliciting his wife :—ay, that's the way :
Dull not device by coldness and delay. *[Exit.*

A C T I I I.

SCENE I.

Before the castle.

Enter CASSIO and some MUSICIANS.

Cas. Masters, play here (I will content your
pains)
Something that's brief; and bid—good-morrow,
general. *[music.*

Enter CLOWN.

Clown. Why, masters, have your instruments
been at Naples, that they speak i' the nose thus?

1 Mu. How, sir, how?

Clown. Are these, I pray you, called wind instruments?

1 Mu. Ay, marry, are they, sir.

Clown. O, thereby hangs a tail.

1 Mu. Whereby hangs a tale, sir?

Clown. Marry, sir, by many a wind instrument
that I know. But, masters, here's money for you

¹ Just at the time.

and the general so likes your music, that he desires you, of all loves, to make no more noise with it.

1 *Mu.* Well, sir, we will not.

Clown. If you have any music that may not be heard, to 't again: but, as they say, to hear music, the general does not greatly care.

1 *Mu.* We have none such, sir.

Clown. Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I 'll away. Go; vanish into air; away.

[*Exeunt Musicians.*]

Cas. Dost thou hear, my honest friend?

Clown. No, I hear not your honest friend; I hear you.

Cas. Pr'ythee keep up thy quilllets.¹ There 's a poor piece of gold for thee: if the gentlewoman that attends the general's wife be stirring, tell her, there 's one Cassio entreats her a little favor of speech. Wilt thou do this?

Clown. She is stirring, sir; if she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her.

Enter IAGO.

Cas. Do, good my friend.—In happy time, Iago.

Iago. You have not been a-bed then?

Cas. Why, no; the day had broke
Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,
'To send in to your wife: my suit to her
Is, that she will to virtuous Desdemona

¹ Nice and frivolous distinction.

Oth. Not now, sweet Desdemona; some other time.

Des. But shall 't be shortly?

Oth. The sooner, sweet, for you.

Des. Shall 't be to-night at supper?

Oth. No, not to-night.

Des. To-morrow dinner then?

Oth. I shall not dine at home :
I meet the captains at the citadel.

Des. Why, then, to-morrow night ; or Tuesday morn ;

Or Tuesday noon, or night ; or Wednesday morn ;—

I pray thee, name the time ; but let it not

Exceed three days : in faith, he 's penitent ;

And yet his trespass, in our common reason,

(Save that, they say, the wars must make examples
Out of their best) ¹ is not almost a fault

To incur a private check. When shall he come?

Tell me, Othello. I wonder in my soul,

What you could ask me, that I should deny,

Or stand so mammering ² on. What! Michael
Cassio,

That came a wooing with you ; and so many a time,

When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,

Hath ta'en your part ; to have so much to do

To bring him in ! Trust me, I could do much,——

¹ i. e. must not spare the best men of the army when their punishment may afford a wholesome example.

² Hesitating.

Oth. Pr'ythee, no more : let him come when he will ;

I will deny thee nothing.

Des. Why, this is not a boon :
'Tis as I should entreat you wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm ;
Or sue to you to do peculiar profit
To your own person. Nay, when I have a suit,
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,
It shall be full of poize¹ and difficulty,
And fearful to be granted.

Oth. I will deny thee nothing :
Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this ;
To leave me but a little to myself.

Des. Shall I deny you ? no. Farewell, my lord.

Oth. Farewell, my Desdemona : I will come to thee straight.

Des. Emilia, come.—Be it as your fancies teach you ;
Whate'er you be, I am obedient.

Exit, with Emilia.

Oth. Excellent wretch ! Perdition catch my soul,
But I do love thee : and when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again.

Iago. My noble lord,——

Oth. What dost thou say, Iago ?

Iago. Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,

¹ Weight.

Know of your love ?

Oth. He did, from first to last : why dost thou ask ?

Iago. But for a satisfaction of my thought.
No farther harm.

Oth. Why of thy thought, Iago ?

Iago. I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

Oth. O, yes ; and went between us very oft.

Iago. Indeed ?

Oth. Indeed ! ay, indeed.—Discern'st thou aught in that ?

Is he not honest ?

Iago. Honest, my lord ?

Oth. Honest ? ay, honest.

Iago. My lord, for aught I know.

Oth. What dost thou think ?

Iago. Think, my lord ?

Oth. Think, my lord !

By heaven, he echoes me,

As if there were some monster in his thought

Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean something :

I heard thee say but now,—thou likedst not that,

When Cassio left my wife : what didst not like ?

And, when I told thee—he was of my counsel

In my whole course of wooing, thou criedst, ' Indeed ! '

And didst contract and purse thy brow together,

As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain

Some horrible conceit. If thou dost love me,

Show me thy thought.

Iago. My lord, you know I love you.

Oth. I think thou dost ;
And,—for I know thou art full of love and honesty,
And weigh'st thy words before thou givest them
breath ;—

'Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more :
For such things, in a false disloyal knave,
Are tricks of custom ; but, in a man that's just,
They are close denotements, working from the
heart,

That passion cannot rule.

Iago. For Michael Cassio,—
I dare be sworn, I think that he is honest.

Oth. I think so too.

Iago. Men should be what they seem ;
Or those that be not, would they might seem none !

Oth. Certain, men should be what they seem.

Iago. Why, then, I think Cassio's an honest
man.

Oth. Nay, yet there's more in this :
I pray thee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,
As thou dost ruminate ; and give thy worst of
thoughts

The worst of words.

Iago. Good my lord, pardon me :
Though I am bound to every act of duty,
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.
Utter my thoughts ? Why, say, they are vile and
false ;—

As where's that palace, whereinto foul things

Sometimes intrude not? who has a breast so pure,
But some uncleanly apprehensions
Keep leets¹ and law-days, and in session sit
With meditations lawful?

Oth. Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,
If thou but think'st him wrong'd, and makest his
ear

A stranger to thy thoughts.

Iago. I do beseech you.—
Though I, perchance, am vicious in my guess;
As, I confess, it is my nature's plague
To spy into abuses; and oft my jealousy
Shapes faults that are not;—I entreat you then,
From one that so imperfectly conjects,²
You'd take no notice; nor build yourself a trouble
Out of his scattering and unsure observance.
It were not for your quiet nor your good,
Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,
'To let you know my thoughts.

Oth. What dost thou mean?

Iago. Good name, in man and woman, dear my
lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.
Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis something,
nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thou-
sands:
But he that filches from me my good name,

¹ Courts of inquiry

For conjectures.

Robs me of that, which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

Oth. By heaven, I'll know thy thought.

Iago. You cannot, if my heart were in your
hand;

Nor shall not, whilst 'tis in my custody.

Oth. Ha!

Iago. [O, beware, my lord, of jealousy :
It is the green-eyed monster, which doth make
The meat it feeds on. That cuckold lives in bliss,
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger ;
But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er,
Who dotes, yet doubts ; suspects, yet strongly
loves !]

Oth. O misery !

Iago. Poor, and content, is rich, and rich enough ;
But riches, fineless,¹ is as poor as winter,
To him that ever fears he shall be poor.
Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
From jealousy !

Oth. Why, why is this ?
Think'st thou, I'd make a life of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh suspicions ? No : to be once in doubt,
Is—once to be resolved. Exchange me for a goat,
When I shall turn the business of my soul
To such exsufflicate² and blown surmises,

¹ Endless, unbounded.

² Strained.

Matching thy inference. 'Tis not to make me
jealous,

To say, my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well :
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous :
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt ;
For she had eyes, and chose me. No, Iago ;
I 'll see before I doubt, when I doubt prove ;
And, on the proof, there is no more but this ;—
Away at once with love or jealousy.

Iago. I am glad of this ; for now I shall have
reason

To show the love and duty that I bear you
With franker spirit : therefore, as I am bound,
Receive it from me :—I speak not yet of proof.
Look to your wife ; observe her well with Cassio ;
Wear your eye—thus, not jealous, nor secure :
I would not have your free and noble nature,
Out of self-bounty, be abused ; look to 't :
I know our country disposition well ;
In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands ; their best con-
science
Is—not to leave undone, but keep unknown.

Oth. Dost thou say so ?

Iago. She did deceive her father, marrying you ;
And, when she seem'd to shake, and fear your
looks,

She loved them most.

Oth.

And so she did.

Iago. Why, go to, then ;
She that, so young, could give out such a seeming.
To seel¹ her father's eyes up, close as oak ;—
He thought 'twas witchcraft :—but I am much to
blame ;

I humbly do beseech you of your pardon,
For too much loving you.

Oth. I am bound to thee for ever.

Iago. I see this hath a little dash'd your spirits.

Oth. Not a jot, not a jot.

Iago. Trust me, I fear it has.
I hope, you will consider, what is spoke
Comes from my love : but I do see you are
moved :

I am to pray you, not to strain my speech
To grosser issues,² nor to larger reach,
Than to suspicion.

Oth. I will not.

Iago. Should you do so, my lord,
My speech should fall into such vile success
As my thoughts aim not at.—Cassio's my worthy
friend :—

My lord, I see you are moved.

Oth. No, not much moved ;
I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

Iago. Long live she so, and long live you to
think so !

Oth. And yet, how nature, erring from itself.——

¹ Blind

Iago. Ay, there's the point:—as,—to be bold
with you,—

Not to affect many proposed matches,
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree;
Whereto, we see, in all things nature tends:
Foh! one may smell, in such, a will most rank.
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.—
But pardon me; I do not, in position,
Distinctly speak of her; though I may fear,
Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
May fall to match you with her country forms,
And, happily,¹ repent.

Oth. Farewell, farewell:
If more thou dost perceive, let me know more;
Set on thy wife to observe.—Leave me, *Iago*.

Iago. My lord, I take my leave. [going.]

Oth. Why did I marry? This honest creature,
doubtless,
Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

Iago. My lord, I would, I might entreat your
honor
To scan this thing no farther; leave it to time.
Though it be fit that Cassio have his place,
(For, sure, he fills it up with great ability)
Yet, if you please to hold him off awhile,
You shall by that perceive him and his means.
Note, if your lady strain his entertainment²

¹ For haply.

² Urgently solicit his restoration to office.

With any strong or vehement importunity ;
Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,
Let me be thought too busy in my fears,
(As wortny cause I have to fear I am)
And hold her free, I do beseech your honor.

Oth. Fear not my government.

Iago. I once more take my leave. [Exit

Oth. 'This fellow's of exceeding honesty,
And knows all qualities with a learned spirit
Of human dealings. If I do prove her haggard¹
Though that her jesses² were my dear heart-strings,
I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,
To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black,
And have not those soft parts of conversation
That chamberers³ have ; or, for I am declined
Into the vale of years ;—yet that's not much :—
She's gone ; I am abused ; and my relief
Must be, to loathe her. O curse of marriage,
That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
And not their appetites ! I had rather be a toad,
And live upon the vapor of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses : yet 'tis the plague of great ones .
Prerogativèd are they less than the base :
'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death :
Even then this forked plague is fated to us.

¹ A haggard is an untamed hawk ; also a term of reproach applied to a wanton.

² Straps of leather by which a hawk is held on the fist.

³ Men of intrigue.

When we do quicken. Desdemona comes.

Enter DESDEMONA and EMILIA.

If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself!
I'll not believe it.

Des. How now, my dear Othello?
Your dinner, and the generous islanders
By you invited, do attend your presence.

Oth. I am to blame.

Des. Why is your speech so faint? are you not
well?

Oth. I have a pain upon my forehead here.

Des. Faith, that's with watching; 'twill away
again:

Let me but bind it hard, within this hour
It will be well.

Oth. Your napkin is too little;

[he puts the handkerchief from him, and it drops.]

Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you.

Des. I am very sorry that you are not well.

[Exeunt Othello and Desdemona.]

Emi. I am glad I have found this napkin;
This was her first remembrance from the Moor:
My wayward husband hath a hundred times
Woo'd me to steal it; but she so loves the token,
(For he conjured her she should ever keep it)
That she reserves it evermore about her,
To kiss and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out
And give 't Iago.
What he'll do with it, Heaven knows, not I:
I nothing, but to please his fantasy.

Enter IAGO.

Iago. How now ! what do you here alone ?

Emi. Do not you chide : I have a thing for you.

Iago. A thing for me ?—it is a common thing.

Emi. Ha !

Iago. To have a foolish wife.

Emi. O, is that all ? What will you give me now
For that same handkerchief ?

Iago. What handkerchief ?

Emi. What handkerchief ?

Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona ;
That which so often you did bid me steal.

Iago. Hast stolen it from her ?

Emi. No, faith ; she let it drop by negligence ;
And, to the advantage, I, being here, took 't up.
Look, here it is.

Iago. A good wench ! give it me.

Emi. What will you do with it, that you have
been so earnest
To have me filch it ?

Iago. Why, what 's that to you ?

[*snatching it*]

Emi. If it be not for some purpose of import,
Give it me again. Poor lady ! she 'll run mad,
When she shall lack it.

Iago. Be not you known of 't ; I have use for it.
Go, leave me.

[*Exit Emilia*]

I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,
And let him find it : trifles, light as air,

Are, to the jealous, confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ. This may do something.
The Moor already changes with my poison.
Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons,
Which, at the first, are scarce found to distaste ;
But, with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur :—I did say so :—

Enter OTHELLO.

Look, where he comes ! Not poppy, nor mandra-
gora,¹
Nor all the drowsy sirups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou owedst² yesterday.

Oth. Ha ! ha ! false to me ? to me ?

Iago. Why, how now, general ? no more of that.

Oth. Avaunt ! be gone ! thou hast set me on the
rack.

I swear, 'tis better to be much abused,
Than but to know 't a little.

Iago. How now, my lord ?

Oth. What sense had I of her stolen hours of
lust ?

I saw it not, thought it not, it harm'd not me ;
I slept the next night well, was free and merry ;
I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips.

¹ The mandragoras, or mandrake, has a powerful soporific quality.

² Possessedst.

He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,
Let him not know 't, and he 's not robb'd at all.

Iago. I am sorry to hear this.

Oth. I had been happy, if the general camp,
Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body,
So I had nothing known : O, now, for ever
Farewell, the tranquil mind ! farewell, content !
Farewell, the plumed troop, and the big wars,
'That make ambition virtue ! O, farewell !
Farewell, the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner ; and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war !
And, O, you mortal engines, whose rude throats
The immortal Jove's dread clamors counterfeit,—
Farewell ! Othello's occupation 's gone !

Iago. Is it possible ? My lord,——

Oth. Villain, be sure thou prove my love a
whore ;

Be sure of it ; give me the ocular proof ;

[taking him by the throat.

Or, by the worth of mine eternal soul,

Thou hadst been better have been born a dog,

Than answer my waked wrath.

Iago.

Is it come to this ?

Oth. Make me to see it ; or, at the least, so
prove it,

That the probation bear no hinge nor loon.

To hang a doubt on ; or woe upon thy life !

Iago. My noble lord,——

Oth. If thou dost slander her and torture me,

Never pray more ; abandon all remorse ;¹
On horror's head horrors accumulate ;
Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amazed :
For nothing canst thou to damnation add
Greater than that.

Iago. O grace ! O heaven defend me !
Are you a man ? have you a soul or sense ?
God be wi' you ; take mine office.—O wretched
fool,

That livest to make thine honesty a vice !—
O monstrous world ! Take note, take note, O
world,

To be direct and honest is not safe.—
I thank you for this profit ; and, from hence,
I'll love no friend, since love breeds such offence.

Oth. Nay, stay : thou shouldst be honest.

Iago. I should be wise ; for honesty's a fool,
And loses that it works for.

Oth. By the world,
I think my wife be honest, and think she is not ;
I think that thou art just, and think thou art not :
I'll have some proof. Her name, that was as fresh
As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black
As mine own face. If there be cords, or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I'll not endure it.—Would, I were satisfied !

Iago. I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion :
I do repent me that I put it to you.

You would be satisfied ?

Oth. Would ? nay, I will.

Iago. And may ; but, how ? how satisfied, my lord ?

Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on ?
Behold her tupp'd ?

Oth. Death and damnation ! O !

Iago. It were a tedious difficulty, I think,
To bring them to that prospect : damn them then,
If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster,
More than their own ! What then ? how then ?
What shall I say ? where 's satisfaction ?
It is impossible you should see this,
Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,
As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross
As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,
If imputation, and strong circumstances,
Which lead directly to the door of truth,
Will give you satisfaction ; you may have it.

Oth. Give me a living ¹ reason that she 's disloyal.

Iago. I do not like the office :

But, sith ² I am enter'd in this cause so far,
Prick'd to it by foolish honesty and love,
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately ;
And, being troubled with a raging tooth,
I could not sleep.

There are a kind of men so loose of soul,
That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs :

¹ Manifest.

² Since.

One of this kind is Cassio.

In sleep I heard him say,—‘ Sweet Desdemona,
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves ! ’

And then, sir, would he gripe, and wring my hand ;
Cry, ‘ O, sweet creature ! ’ and then kiss me hard,
As if he pluck’d up kisses by the roots,

‘ That grew upon my lips ; then laid his leg
Over my thigh, and sigh’d, and kiss’d ; and then
Cried, ‘ Cursed fate, that gave thee to the Moor ! ’

Oth. O monstrous ! monstrous !

Iago. Nay, this was but his dream.

Oth. But this denoted a foregone conclusion :
‘ Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.

Iago. And this may help to thicken other proofs,
That do demonstrate thinly.

Oth. I ’ll tear her all to pieces.

Iago. Nay, but be wise : yet we see nothing
done ;

She may be honest yet. Tell me but this :—

Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief,
Spotted with strawberries, in your wife’s hand ?

Oth. I gave her such a one ; ’twas my first gift.

Iago. I know not that ; but such a handkerchief
(I am sure it was your wife’s) did I to-day
See Cassio wipe his beard with.

Oth. If it be that,—

Iago. If it be that, or any that was hers,
It speaks against her, with the other proofs.

Oth. O, that the slave had forty thousand lives !
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.
Now do I see ’tis true.—Look here, Iago ;

All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven :

'Tis gone.

Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell !

Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne ¹

To tyrannous hate ! swell, bosom, with thy fraught,

For 'tis of aspics' tongues !

Iago. Pray, be content.

Oth. O, blood, Iago, blood !

Iago. Patience, I say : your mind, perhaps, may
change.

Oth. Never, Iago. Like to the Pontic sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontic and the Hellespont ;
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable ² and wide revenge
Swallow them up.—Now, by yond' marble heaven,
In the due reverence of a sacred vow [*kneels.*
I here engage my words.

Iago. Do not rise yet.—

[*kneels*

Witness, you ever-burning lights above !
You elements, that clip ³ us round about !
Witness, that here Iago doth give up
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,
To wrong'd Othello's service ! let him command,

¹ i. e. the heart on which thou wast enthroned.

² Capable for capacious.

³ Embrace.

And to obey shall be in me remorse,¹
What bloody work soever.

Oth. I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous.

And will upon the instant put thee to 't:
Within these three days let me hear thee say,
That Cassio 's not alive.

Iago. My friend is dead; 'tis done, at your request:

But let her live.

Oth. Damn her, lewd minx! O, damn her!
Come, go with me apart; I will withdraw,
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.

Iago. I am your own for ever. [Exit.

SCENE IV.

The same.

Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, and CLOWN.

Des. Do you know, sirrah, where lieutenant Cassio lies?

Clown. I dare not say, he lies any where.

Des. Why, man?

Clown. He is a soldier; and for me to say a soldier lies, is stabbing.

¹ i. e. an act of tenderness to Othello, not of malice to his wrongers.

Des. Go to : where lodges he ?

Clown. To tell you where he lodges is to tell you where I lie.

Des. Can any thing be made of this ?

Clown. I know not where he lodges ; and for me to devise a lodging, and say, he lies here, or he lies there, were to lie in my own throat.

Des. Can you inquire him out, and be edified by report ?

Clown. I will catechise the world for him ; that is, make questions, and by them answer.

Des. Seek him ; bid him come hither : tell him, I have moved my lord in his behalf, and hope all will be well.

Clown. To do this, is within the compass of man's wit ; and therefore I will attempt the doing it.

[*Exit.*

Des. Where should I lose that handkerchief,
Emilia ?

Emi. I know not, madam.

Des. Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse
Full of crusadoes : ¹ and, but my noble Moör
Is true of mind, and made of no such baseness
As jealous creatures are, it were enough
To put him to ill thinking.

Emi. Is he not jealous ?

Des. Who, he ? I think, the sun, where he was
born,

Drew all such humors from him.

Emi. Look, where he comes.

Des. I will not leave him now till Cassio
Be call'd to him.—How is 't with you, my lord?

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. Well, my good lady.—[*aside.*] O, hardness
to dissemble!—

How do you, Desdemona?

Des. Well, my good lord.

Oth. Give me your hand. This hand is moist, my
lady.

Des. It yet has felt no age, nor known no
sorrow.

Oth. This argues fruitfulness, and liberal heart;—
Hot, hot, and moist: this hand of yours re-
quires

A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout;
For here 's a young and sweating devil here,
That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand,
A frank one.

Des. You may, indeed, say so:
For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.

Oth. A liberal hand. The hearts, of old, gave
hands;

But our new heraldry is—hands, not hearts.

Des. I cannot speak of this. Come now, your
promise.

Oth. What promise, chuck?

Des. I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with
you.

Oth. I have a salt and sullen rheum offends me :
Lend me thy handkerchief.

Des. Here, my lord.

Oth. That which I gave you.

Des. I have it not about me.

Oth. Not ?

Des. No, indeed, my lord.

Oth. That is a fault :

That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give :

She was a charmer,¹ and could almost read

The thoughts of people : she told her, while she
kept it,

'Twould make her amiable, and subdue my father

Intirely to her love ; but if she lost it,

Or made a gift of it, my father's eye

Should hold her loathly, and his spirits should hunt

After new fancies : she, dying, gave it me ;

And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,

To give it her : I did so ; and take heed of 't ;

Make it a darling like your precious eye :

To lose or give 't away, were such perdition,

As nothing else could match.

Des. Is it possible ?

Oth. 'Tis true ; there 's magic in the web of it :

A sibyl, that had number'd in the world

¹ Enchantress.

'The sun to make two hundred compasses,
In her prophetic fury sew'd the work :
The worms were hallow'd, that did breed the silk ;
And it was died in mummy, which the skilful
Conserved of maidens' hearts.

Des. Indeed ! is 't true ?

Oth. Most veritable ; therefore look to 't well.

Des. Then, would to heaven, that I had never
seen it.

Oth. Ha ! wherefore ?

Des. Why do you speak so startingly and rash ?

Oth. Is 't lost ? is 't gone ? speak, is it out of the
way ?

Des. Heaven bless us !

Oth. Say you ?

Des. It is not lost ; but what an if it were ?

Oth. Ha !

Des. I say, it is not lost.

Oth. Fetch 't ; let me see it.

Des. Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now.

This is a trick to put me from my suit :

I pray, let Cassio be received again.

Oth. Fetch me that handkerchief : my mind mis-
gives.

Des. Come, come ;

You 'll never meet a more sufficient man.

Oth. The handkerchief,——

Des. I pray, talk me of Cassio. ,

Oth. The handkerchief,——

Des. A man that, all his time,
Hath founded his good fortune on your love ;

Shared dangers with you ;——

Oth. The handkerchief,——

Des. In sooth, you are to blame.

Oth. Away !

[*Erit Othello.*

Emi. Is not this man jealous ?

Des. I ne'er saw this before.

Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief :

I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

Emi. 'Tis not a year or two shows us a man :
They are all but stomachs, and we all but food :
They eat us hungerly, and when they are full,
They belch us. Look you ! Cassio, and my husband.

Enter IAGO and CASSIO.

Iago. There is no other way ; 'tis she must do 't ;
And, lo, the happiness ! go, and importune her.

Des. How now, good Cassio ? what's the news
with you ?

Cas. Madam, my former suit : I do beseech you.
That, by your virtuous means, I may again
Exist, and be a member of his love,
Whom I, with all the duty of my heart,
Intirely honor : I would not be delay'd.
If my offence be of such mortal kind,
That neither service past, nor present sorrow,
Nor purposed merit in futurity,
Can ransom me into his love again,
But to know so must be my benefit ;
So shall I clothe me in a forced content.

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. Save you, friend Cassio !

Cas. What makes you from home ?
How is it with you, my most fair Bianca ?
I' faith, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

Bian. And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.
What ! keep a week away ? seven days and nights ?
Eight score eight hours ? and lovers' absent hours,
More tedious than the dial eight score times ?
O weary reckoning !

Cas. Pardon me, Bianca ;
I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd ;
But I shall, in a more continue time,¹
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,
[*giving her Desdemona's handkerchief.*
Take me this work out.²

Bian. O Cassio, whence came this ?
This is some token from a newer friend :
'To the felt absence now I feel a cause.
Is it come to this ? Well, well.

Cas. Go to, woman !
Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,
From whence you have them. You are jealous
now,
That this is from some mistress, some remembrance.
No, in good troth, Bianca.

¹ i. e. time less interrupted, more my own.

² i. e. copy this work in another handkerchief.

Bian. Why, whose is it?

Cas. I know not, sweet: I found it in my chamber.

I like the work well: ere it be demanded,
(As like enough, it will) I'd have it copied:
Take it, and do't; and leave me for this time.

Bian. Leave you! wherefore?

Cas. I do attend here on the general;
And think it no addition, nor my wish,
To have him see me woman'd.

Bian. Why, I pray you?

Cas. Not, that I love you not.

Bian. But that you do not love me.
I pray you, bring me on the way a little;
And say, if I shall see you soon at night.

Cas. 'Tis but a little way that I can bring you,
For I attend here: but I'll see you soon.

Bian. 'Tis very good; I must be circumstanced.¹

[*Exeunt.*

¹ Give way to circumstances.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

*The same.**Enter OTHELLO and IAGO.**Iago.* Will you think so?*Oth.* Think so, Iago?*Iago.* What,

To kiss in private?

Oth. An unauthorised kiss.*Iago.* Or to be naked with her friend abed
An hour or more, not meaning any harm?*Oth.* Naked abed, Iago, and not mean harm?
It is hypocrisy against the devil.
They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,
The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt
heaven.*Iago.* So they do nothing, 'tis a venial slip:
But if I give my wife a handkerchief,——*Oth.* What then?*Iago.* Why, then 'tis hers, my lord; and, being
hers,

She may, I think, bestow 't on any man.

Oth. She is protectress of her honor too;
May she give that?*Iago.* Her honor is an essence that's not seen;
They have it very oft, that have it not:
But, for the handkerchief ——

Oth. By heaven, I would most gladly have forgot it:—

Thou saidst,—O, it comes o'er my memory,
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all,¹—he had my handkerchief.

Iago. Ay, what of that?

Oth. That's not so good, now.

Iago. What, if I had said, I had seen him do you wrong?

Or heard him say,—as knaves be such abroad,
Who having, by their own importunate suit,
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
Convinced² or supplied³ them, cannot choose
But they must blab——

Oth. Hath he said any thing?

Iago. He hath, my lord; but, be you well assured,
No more than he'll unswear.

Oth. What hath he said?

Iago. Faith, that he did,—I know not what he did.

Oth. What? what?

Iago. Lie——

Oth. With her?

Iago. With her, on her; what you will.

Oth. Lie with her! lie on her!—We say, lie on her, when they belie her. Lie with her! that's fulsome.—Handkerchief,—confessions,—handkerchief.

¹ The raven was thought to be a constant attendant on a house infected with the plague.

² Overcome.

³ Old spelling of supplied, i. e. softened.

—'To confess, and be hanged for his labor.—First, to be hanged, and then to confess:—I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction.¹ It is not words that shake me thus.—Pish!—Noses, ears, and lips.—Is it possible?—Confess!—Handkerchief!—O devil!—
[*falls in a trance.*]

Iago. Work on,
My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are caught;
And many worthy and chaste dames, even thus,
All guiltless meet reproach.—What, ho! my lord!

Enter CASSIO.

My lord, I say! Othello!—How now, Cassio?

Cas. What is the matter?

Iago. My lord is fallen into an epilepsy:
This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.

Cas. Rub him about the temples.

Iago. No, forbear:
The lethargy must have his quiet course;
If not, he foams at mouth; and, hy and by,
Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs:
Do you withdraw yourself a little while,
He will recover straight: when he is gone,
I would on great occasion speak with you.—
[*Exit Cassio.*]

¹ 'i. e. this passion, which spreads its clouds over me, is one of those notices which men have of unseen calamities.'—Johnson.

How is it, general? have you not hurt your head?

Oth. Dost thou mock me?

Iago. I mock you! no, by heaven.

Would, you would bear your fortunes like a man.

Oth. A horned man's a monster and a beast.

Iago. There's many a beast then in a populous city,

And many a civil monster.

Oth. Did he confess it?

Iago. Good sir, be a man:

Think, every bearded fellow, that's but yoked,

May draw with you: there's millions now alive,

That nightly lie in those unproper¹ beds,

Which they dare swear peculiar: your case is better.

O, 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,

To lip a wanton in a secure couch,

And to suppose her chaste! No, let me know;

And, knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.

Oth. O, thou art wise; 'tis certain.

Iago. Stand you awhile apart;

Confine yourself but in a patient list.²

Whilst you were here, ere while mad with your grief,

(A passion most unsuited such a man)

Cassio came hither: I shifted him away,

And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy;³

¹ Common.

² Within the bounds of patience.

³ Alienation of mind.

Bade him anon return, and here speak with me :
The which he promised. Do but encave yourself.
And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorne,
That dwell in every region of his face ;
For I will make him tell the tale anew,
Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when
He hath, and is again to cope your wife :
I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience ;
Or I shall say, you are all in all in spleen,
And nothing of a man.

Oth. Dost thou hear, Iago ?
I will be found most cunning in my patience :
But (dost thou hear ?) most bloody.

Iago. That 's not amiss ;
But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw ?
[*Othello withdraws.*]

Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,
A housewife, that, by selling her desires,
Buys herself bread and clothes : it is a creature,
'That dotes on Cassio : as 'tis the strumpet's plague
'To beguile many and be beguiled by one ;
He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain
From the excess of laughter.—Here he comes.

Re-enter CASSIO.

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad ;
And his unbookish¹ jealousy must construe
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behavior

¹ Ignorant

Quite in the wrong.—How do you now, lieutenant?

Cas. The worser, that you give me the addition,¹
Whose want even kills me.

Iago. Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure cf't.
Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power,

[*speaking lower.*

How quickly should you speed!

Cas. Alas, poor caitiff!

Oth. Look, how he laughs already! [*aside.*

Iago. I never knew a woman love man so.

Cas. Alas, poor rogue! I think, i' faith, she loves
me.

Oth. Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.
[*aside.*

Iago. Do you hear, Cassio?

Oth. Now he importunes him
To tell it o'er. Go to; well said, well said. [*aside.*

Iago. She gives it out, that you shall marry her:
Do you intend it?

Cas. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. Do you triumph, Roman? do you triumph?
[*aside.*

Cas. I marry her!—what? a customer!² I pr'ythee,
bear some charity to my wit; do not think it so un-
wholesome. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. So, so, so, so: they laugh that win. [*aside.*

Iago. Faith, the cry goes, that you shall marry
her.

¹ Title of lieutenant

² A common woman.

Cas. Pr'ythee, say true.

Iago. I am a very villain else.

Oth. Have you scored me? Well. [*aside.*

Cas. This is the monkey's own giving out: she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

Oth. Iago beckons me: now he begins the story. [*aside.*

Cas. She was here even now; she haunts me in every place. I was, the other day, talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians; and thither comes the bauble: by this hand, she falls thus about my neck;——

Oth. Crying, O dear Cassio! as it were: his gesture imports it. [*aside.*

Cas. So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me; so hales, and pulls me! ha, ha, ha!

Oth. Now he tells, how she plucked him to my chamber. O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to. [*aside.*

Cas. Well, I must leave her company.

Iago. Before me! look, where she comes.

Enter BIANCA.

Cas. 'Tis such another fitchew!¹ marry, a perfumed one.—What do you mean by this haunting of me?

Bian. Let the devil and his dam haunt you!

¹ A polecat.

What did you mean by that same handkerchief you gave me even now? I was a fine fool to take it! I must take out the whole work?—A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work? There, give it your hobby-horse: wheresoever you had it, I'll take out no work on't.

Cas. How now, my sweet Bianca? how now? how now?

Oth. By heaven, that should be my handkerchief!
[*aside.*

Bian. An you'll come to supper to-night, you may; an you will not, come when you are next prepared for.
[*Exit.*

Iago. After her, after her.

Cas. Faith, I must; she'll rail in the street else.

Iago. Will you sup there?

Cas. Faith, I intend so.

Iago. Well, I may chance to see you; for I would very fain speak with you.

Cas. Pr'ythee, come; will you?

Iago. Go to; say no more. [Exit *Cassio.*

Oth. How shall I murder him, Iago?

Iago. Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice?

Oth. O, Iago!

Iago. And did you see the handkerchief?

Oth. Was that mine?

Iago. Yours, by this hand; and to see how he

Des. Cousin, there 's fallen between him and my
lord

An unkind breach ; but you shall make all well.

Oth. Are you sure of that ?

Des. My lord ?

Oth. ' This fail you not to do, as you will—'

[reads

Lo. He did not call ; he 's busy in the paper.—
Is there division 'twixt thy lord and Cassio ?

Des. A most unhappy one : I would do much
To atone¹ them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

Oth. Fire and brimstone !

Des. My lord ?

Oth. Are you wise ?

Des. What, is he angry ?

Lo. May be, the letter moved him ;
For, as I think, they do command him home,
Deputing Cassio in his government.

Des. By my troth, I am glad on 't.

Oth. Indeed ?

Des. My lord ?

Oth. I am glad to see you mad.

Des. How, sweet Othello ?

Oth. Devil ! [striking her.

Des. I have not deserved this.

Lo. My lord, this would not be believed in
Venice,

Though I should swear I saw it : 'tis very much.

¹ Reconcile.

Make her amends ; she weeps.

Oth. O devil, devil !
If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.—
Out of my sight !

Des. I will not stay to offend you.

[*going.*

Lo. Truly, an obedient lady :
I do beseech your lordship, call her back.

Oth. Mistress,——

Des. My lord ?

Oth. What would you with her, sir ?

Lo. Who, I, my lord ?

Oth. Ay ; you did wish that I would make her
turn :

Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,
And turn again : and she can weep, sir, weep ;
And she's obedient, as you say,—obedient,—
Very obedient ;—proceed you in your tears.—
Concerning this, sir ;—O, well-painted passion !
I am commanded home :—get you away ;
I'll send for you anon.—Sir, I obey the mandate.
And will return to Venice.—Hence, avaunt !

[*Exit Desdemona.*

Cassio shall have my place : and, sir, to-night,
I do entreat that we may sup together.
You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus.—Goats and mon-
keys !

[*Exit.*

Lo. Is this the noble Moor, whom our full se-
nate

Call all-in-all sufficient? this the noble nature,
Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue
The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,
Could neither graze nor pierce?

Iago. He is much changed.

Lo. Are his wits safe? is he not light of brain?

Iago. He is that he is: I may not breathe my
censure.

What he might be,—if, what he might, he is not,—
I would to Heaven he were.

Lo. What, strike his wife!

Iago. Faith, that was not so well; yet would I
knew

That stroke would prove the worst.

Lo. Is it his use?

Or did the letters work upon his blood,
And new-create this fault?

Iago. Alas, alas!

It is not honesty in me to speak

What I have seen and known. You shall observe
him;

And his own courses will denote him so,

That I may save my speech. Do but go after,

And mark how he continues.

Lo. I am sorry that I am deceived in him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A room in the castle.

Enter OTHELLO and EMILIA.

Oth. You have seen nothing then ?

Emi. Nor ever heard, nor ever did suspect.

Oth. Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.

Emi. But then I saw no harm ; and then I heard
Each syllable, that breath made up between them.

Oth. What, did they never whisper ?

Emi. Never, my lord.

Oth. Nor send you out o' the way ?

Emi. Never.

Oth. To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor
nothing ?

Emi. Never, my lord.

Oth. That 's strange.

Emi. I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest ;
Lay down my soul at stake : if you think other,
Remove your thought ; it doth abuse your bosom.
If any wretch hath put this in your head,
Let Heaven requite it with the serpent's curse !
For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true,
There 's no man happy ; the purest of their wives
Is foul as slander.

Oth. Bid her come hither ; go.

[Exit Emilia.]

She says enough ; yet she 's a simple bawd
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,
A closet lock and key of villanous secrets :

And yet she'll kneel and pray; I have seen her
do't.

Re-enter EMILIA, with DESDEMONA.

Des. My lord, what is your will?

Oth. Pray, chuck, come hither.

Des. What is your pleasure?

Oth. Let me see your eyes:
Look in my face.

Des. What horrible fancy's this?

Oth. Some of your function, mistress:

[to Emilia.

Leave procreants alone, and shut the door;

Cough, or cry hem, if any body come:

Your mystery, your mystery!—nay, despatch.

[Exit Emilia.

Des. Upon my knees, what doth your speech im-
port?

I understand a fury in your words,

But not the words.

Oth. Why, what art thou?

Des. Your wife, my lord; your true
And loyal wife.

Oth. Come, swear it; damn thyself;
Lest, being like one of heaven, the devils them-
selves

Should fear to seise thee; therefore be double-
damn'd;

Swear thou art honest.

Des. Heaven doth truly know it.

Forster del.

T. Sterling sc.

OTHELLO.
Othello and Desdemona.
Act IV. Scene II.

Oth. Heaven truly knows that thou art false as hell.

Des. To whom, my lord? With whom? How am I false?

Oth. O Desdemona! away! away! away!

Des. Alas, the heavy day!—Why do you weep?
Am I the occasion of these tears, my lord?
If, haply, you my father do suspect
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not your blame on me: if you have lost
him,

Why, I have lost him too.

Oth. Had it pleased Heaven
To try me with affliction; had he rain'd
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head;
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips;
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes;
I should have found in some part of my soul
A drop of patience: but, alas! to make me
A fixed figure, for the time of scorn
To point his slow unmoving finger at;—
O! O!

Yet could I bear that too; well, very well.
But there, where I have garner'd¹ up my heart;
Where either I must live, or bear no life;
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or else dries up; to be discarded thence;
Or keep it as a cistern, for foul toads

¹ Treasured.

To knot and gender in!—turn thy complexion there!

Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin ;
Ay, there, look grim as hell !

Des. I hope, my noble lord esteems me honest.

Oth. O, ay ; as summer flies are in the shambles,
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,
Who art so lovely fair, and smell'st so sweet,
That the sense aches at thee ;——would, thou hadst
ne'er been born !

Des. Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed ?

Oth. Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write whore upon ? What committed !
Committed !—O thou public commoner !
I should make very forges of my cheeks,
That would to cinders burn up modesty,
Did I but speak thy deeds.—What committed !
Heaven stops the nose at it, and the moon winks ;
The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets,
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
And will not hear it.—What committed !—
Impudent strumpet !

Des. By heaven, you do me wrong.

Oth. Are not you a strumpet ?

Des. No, as I am a Christian :
If to preserve this vessel for my lord,
From any other foul unlawful touch,
Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.

Oth. What, not a whore ?

Des. No, as I shall be saved,

Oth. Is it possible ?

Des. O, Heaven forgive us!

Oth. I cry you mercy then;
I took you for that cunning whore of Venice,
'That married with Othello.—You, mistress,

Enter EMILIA.

'That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,
And keep the gate of hell;—you! you! ay, you!
We have done our course; there's money for your
pains:

I pray you, turn the key, and keep our counsel.

[*Erit.*

Emi. Alas, what does this gentleman conceive?—
How do you, madam? how do you, my good lady?

Des. Faith, half asleep.

Emi. Good madam, what's the matter with my
lord?

Des. With who?

Emi. Why, with my lord, madam.

Des. Who is thy lord?

Emi. He that is yours, sweet lady.

Des. I have none: do not talk to me, Emilia;
I cannot weep; nor answer I have none,
But what should go by water. Pr'ythee, to-night
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets,—remember;
And call thy husband hither.

Emi. Here is a change, indeed!

[*Erit.*

Des. 'Tis meet I should be used so, very meet.
How have I been behaved, that he might stick

The small'st opinion on my great'st abuse?

Re-enter EMILIA, with IAGO.

Iago. What is your pleasure, madam? How is it with you?

Des. I cannot tell. Those, that do teach young babes,

Do it with gentle means and easy tasks:

He might have chid me so; for, in good faith,
I am a child to chiding.

Iago. What's the matter, lady?

Emi. Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhored her,
Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
As true hearts cannot bear.

Des. Am I that name, Iago?

Iago. What name, fair lady?

Des. Such as, she says, my lord did say I was.

Emi. He call'd her, whore: a beggar, in his
drink,

Could not have laid such terms upon his callet.¹

Iago. Why did he so?

Des. I do not know: I am sure, I am none such.

Iago. Do not weep, do not weep. Alas, the
day!

Emi. Has she forsook so many noble matches,
Her father, and her country, and her friends,
To be call'd whore? Would it not make one weep?

¹ His drab.

Des. It is my wretched fortune.

Iago. Beshrew him for it!

How comes this trick upon him?

Des. Nay, Heaven doth know.

Emi. I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some cogging, cozening slave, to get some office,
Have not devised this slander; I'll be hang'd else.

Iago. Fie, there is no such man; it is impossible.

Des. If any such there be, Heaven pardon him!

Emi. A halter pardon him, and hell gnaw his
bones!

Why should he call her whore? who keeps her
company?

What place? what time? what form? what like-
lihood?

The Moor's abused by some most villanous knave,
Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.—
O, heaven, that such companions¹ thou'dst unfold;
And put in every honest hand a whip,
To lash the rascal naked through the world,
Even from the east to the west!

Iago. Speak within door.

Emi. O, fie upon him! Some such squire he was,
That turn'd your wit the seamy side without,*
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

Iago. You are a fool; go to.

Des. O good Iago,

¹ Fellows.

² Inside out.

What shall I do to win my lord again ?
Good friend, go to him ; for, by this light of heaven.
I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel.—
If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
Either in discourse of thought, or actual deed ;
Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense
Delighted them in any other form ;
Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
And ever will,—though he do shake me off
To beggarly divorcement,—love him dearly,
Comfort forswear me ! Unkindness may do much,
And his unkindness may defeat my life,
But never taint my love. I cannot say, whore ;
It does abhor me, now I speak the word :
To do the act that might the addition ¹ earn,
Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.

Iago. I pray you, be content ; 'tis but his humor :
The business of the state does him offence,
And he does chide with you.

Des. If 'twere no other.—

Iago. It is but so, I warrant you. [*trumpets.*]
Hark, how these instruments summon to supper !
And the great messengers of Venice stay.
Go in, and weep not ; all things shall be well.

[*Exeunt Desdemona and Emilia.*]

Enter RODRIGO.

How now. Roderigo ?

¹ Title.

Ro. I do not find that thou deal'st justly with me.

Iago. What in the contrary?

Ro. Every day thou doffest me ¹ with some device, Iago; and rather, as it seems to me now, keepest from me all conveniency than suppliest me with the least advantage of hope. I will, indeed, no longer endure it; nor am I yet persuaded to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered.

Iago. Will you hear me, Roderigo?

Ro. Faith, I have heard too much; for your words and performances are no kin together.

Iago. You charge me most unjustly.

Ro. With naught but truth. I have wasted myself out of my means: the jewels you have had from me to deliver to Desdemona would half have corrupted a votarist. You have told me she has received them, and returned me expectations and comforts of sudden respect and acquittance; ² but I find none.

Iago. Well; go to; very well.

Ro. Very well! go to! I cannot go to, man; nor 'tis not very well: by this hand, I say, it is very scurvy; and begin to find myself fobbed in it.

Iago. Very well.

Ro. I tell you, 'tis not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona: if she will return me my jewels, I will give over my suit, and repent my

¹ Puttest me off.

² Requitai

unlawful solicitation; if not, assure yourself, I will seek satisfaction of you.

Iago. You have said now.

Ro. Ay, and I have said nothing but what I protest intendment of doing.

Iago. Why, now I see there's mettle in thee; and even, from this instant, do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo: thou hast taken against me a most just exception; but yet, I protest, I have dealt most directly in thy affair.

Ro. It hath not appeared.

Iago. I grant, indeed, it hath not appeared; and your suspicion is not without wit and judgment. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that within thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever,—I mean, purpose, courage, and valor,—this night show it: if thou the next night following enjoyest not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery, and devise engines for my life.

Ro. Well, what is it? is it within reason and compass?

Iago. Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice, to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

Ro. Is that true? why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

Iago. O, no; he goes into Mauritania, and takes away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here by some accident; wherein none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio.

Ro. How do you mean, removing of him?

Iago. Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place; knocking out his brains.

Ro. And that you would have me do?

Iago. Ay, if you dare do yourself a profit and a right. He sups to-night with a harlot, and thither will I go to him; he knows not yet of his honorable fortune. If you will watch his going thence, (which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one) you may take him at your pleasure; I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amazed at it, but go along with me: I will show you such a necessity in his death, that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high supper-time, and the night grows to waste:¹ about it.

Ro. I will hear farther reason for this.

Iago. And you shall be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Another room in the castle.

Enter OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA, and Attendants.

Lo. I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no farther.

Oth. O, pardon me; 'twill do me good to walk.

Lo. Madam, good night: I humbly thank your ladyship.

¹ i. e. is wasting apace.

Des. Your honor is most welcome.

Oth. Will you walk, sir?—

O. Desdemona,—

Des. My lord?

Oth. Get you to bed on the instant; I will be
sed forthwith: dismiss your attendant there:
it be done.

D. I will, my lord.

[*Exeunt Othello, Lodovico, and Attendants.*]

i. How goes it now? he looks gentler than he
did.

D. He says, he will return incontinent.¹

i. With commanded me to go to bed;

D. Made me to dismiss you.

i. Dismiss me?

D. It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia,

me my nightly wearing, and adieu.

i. Must not now displease him.

D. I would, you had never seen him!

i. So would not I: my love doth so approve
him,

even his stubbornness, his checks, and
frowns,—

D. See, unpin me,—have grace and favor in them.

i. I have laid those sheets you bade me on
the bed.

D. All's one:—Good father! how foolish are
our minds!—

¹ Immediately.

If I do die before thee, pr'ythee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.

Emi. Come, come; you talk.

Des. My mother had a maid call'd Barbara;
She was in love, and he she loved proved mad,¹
And did forsake her: she had a song of—Willow;
An old thing 'twas, but it express'd her fortune,
And she died singing it: that song, to-night,
Will not go from my mind: I have much to do,
But to go hang my head all at one side,
And sing it like poor Barbara.—Pr'ythee, despatch.

Emi. Shall I go fetch your night-gown?

Des. No, unpin me here.—

This Lodovico is a proper man.

Emi. A very handsome man.

Des. And he speaks well.

Emi. I know a lady in Venice, who would have
walked barefoot to Palestine for a touch of his nether
lip.

I.

Des. ' The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore
tree;

[singing.]

Sing all a green willow;

Her hand on her bosom, her head on her
knee;

Sing willow, willow, willow.

¹ Wild, inconstant.

The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her
MOODS ;

Sing willow, &c.

Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the
stones ;'

Lay by these :

' Sing willow, willow, willow ;'

Pr'ythee, hie thee ; he 'll come anon.—

' Sing all a green willow must be my garland.'

II.

' Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve ;—'

Nay, that's not next. — Hark ! who is it that
knocks ?

Emi. It is the wind.

Des. ' I call'd my love, false love ; but what said
he then ?

Sing willow, &c.

If I court mo women, you 'll couch with mo men.'

So get thee gone : good night. Mine eyes do itch :
Doth that bode weeping ?

Emi. 'Tis neither here nor there.

Des. I have heard it said so.—O, these men,
these men !—

— thou in conscience think,—tell me, Emilia,—

That there be women do abuse their husbands
In such gross kind?

Emi. There be some such, no question.

Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the
world?

Emi. Why, would not you?

Des. No, by this heavenly light!

Emi. Nor I neither by this heavenly light:
I might do 't as well i' the dark.

Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the
world?

Emi. The world is a huge thing: 'tis a great
price
For a small vice.

Des. Good troth, I think thou wouldst not.

Emi. By my troth, I think I should, and undo 't
when I had done. Marry, I would not do such a
thing for a joint-ring, nor for measures of lawn; nor
for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty ex-
hibition:¹ but, for the whole world,——Why, who
would not make her husband a cuckold to make him
a monarch? I should venture purgatory for 't.

Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong for
the whole world.

Emi. Why, the wrong is but a wrong i' the world;
and, having the world for your labor, 'tis a wrong
in your own world, and you might quickly make it
right.

¹ Pecuniary allowance.

Des. I do not think there is any such woman.

Emi. Yes, a dozen; and as many
To the vantage,¹ as would store the world they
play'd for.

But, I do think, it is their husbands' faults,
If wives do fall. Say, that they slack their duties,
And pour our treasures into foreign laps;
Or else break out in peevish jealousies,
Throwing restraint upon us; or, say, they strike us,
Or scant our former having in despite;²
Why, we have galls; and, though we have some
grace,

Yet we have some revenge. Let husbands know,
Their wives have sense³ like them: they see and
smell,

And have their palates both for sweet and sour,
As husbands have. What is it that they do,
When they change us for others? Is it sport?
I think it is: and doth affection breed it?
I think it doth: is 't frailty that thus errs?
It is so too: and have not we affectione,
Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have?
'Then, let them use us well; else, let them know,
The ills we do, their ills instruct us so.

Des. Good night, good night. Heaven me such
usage send,

Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad mend!

[*Exeunt.*]

¹ Abridge our pin-money in a pot.

A C T V.

SCENE I.

*A street.**Enter IAGO and RODERIGO.*

Iago. Here, stand behind this bulk ; straight will
he come :

Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home ;
Quick, quick ; fear nothing ; I'll be at thy elbow :
It makes us or it mars us ; think on that ;
And fix most firm thy resolution.

Ro. Be near at hand ; I may miscarry in 't.

Iago. Here, at thy hand ; be bold, and take thy
sword. *[retires to a little distance.*

Ro. I have no great devotion to the deed ;
And yet he has given me satisfying reasons.—
'Tis but a man gone :—forth, my sword ; he dies.
[goes to his stand.

Iago. I have rubb'd this young quat¹ almost to
the sense,²

And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain. Live Roderigo,
He calls me to a restitution large
Of gold and jewels, that I hobb'd from him,

¹ Pimple.

² To the quick.

As gifts to Desdemona ;—
It must not be : if Cassio do remain,
He hath a daily beauty in his life,
'That makes me ugly ; and, besides, the Moor
May unfold me to him : there stand I in much
peril.

No, he must die :—but, so ; I hear him coming.

Enter CASSIO.

Ro. I know his gait ; 'tis he :—villain, thou diest.

[rushes from his post, and makes a pass at Cassio.

Cas. That thrust had been mine enemy indeed,
But that my coat is better than thou think'st :
I will make proof of thine.

[draws, and wounds Roderigo.

Ro. O, I am slain !

*[Iago rushes from his post, cuts Cassio behind
in the leg, and exit.*

Cas. I am maim'd for ever.—Help, ho ! murder,
murder ! *[falls.*

Enter OTHELLO, at a distance.

Oth. The voice of Cassio :—Iago keeps his word.

Ro. O, villain that I am !

Oth. Hark ! 'tis even so.

Cas. O, help ! ho ! light ! a surgeon !

Oth. 'Tis he.—O brave Iago, honest and just,
'That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong !
Thou teachest me.—Minion, your dear lies dead,
And your fate lies apace.—Strumpet, I come :

Forth¹ of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are
biotted;
'Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be
spotted. *[Exit Othello.*

Enter LODOVICO *and* GRATIANO, *at a distance.*

Cas. What, ho! no watch? no passage?² murder!
murder!

Gra. 'Tis some mischance; the cry is very
direful.

Cas. O, help!

Lo. Hark!

Ro. O wretched villain!

Lo. Two or three groans!—it is a heavy³ night:
These may be counterfeits; let's think 't unsafe
'To come in to the cry, without more help.

Ro. Nobody come? then shall I bleed to death.

Enter IAGO, *with a light.*

Lo. Hark!

Gra. Here's one comes in his shirt, with light
and weapons.

Iago. Who's there? whose noise is this, that
cries on murder?

Lo. We do not know.

Iago. Did you not hear a cry?

Cas. Here, here; for heaven's sake, help me.

¹ Out.

² No passengers.

³ Thick, cloudy.

Iago. What 's the matter?

Gra. This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.

Lo. The same, indeed; a very valiant fellow.

Iago. What are you here, that cry so grievously?

Cas. Iago? O, I am spoil'd, undone by villains!
Give me some help.

Iago. O me, lieutenant! what villains have done
this?

Cas. I think that one of them is hereabout,
And cannot make away.

Iago. O treacherous villains!—
What are you there? come in, and give some help.
[to Lodovico and Gratiano.]

Ro. O, help me here!

Cas. That 's one of them.

Iago. O murderous slave! O villain!
[*Iago stabs Roderigo.*]

Ro. O damn'd Iago! O inhuman dog!—
O! O! O!

Iago. Kill men i' the dark!—Where be these
bloody thieves?—
How silent is this town!—Ho! murder! murder!
What may you be? are you of good or evil?

Lo. As you shall prove us, praise us.

Iago. Signior Lodovico?

Lo. He, sir.

Iago. I cry you mercy: here 's Cassio hurt
By villains.

Gra. Cassio?

Iago. How is it, brother?

Cas. My leg is cut in two.

Iago. Marry, Heaven forbid!—
Light, gentlemen; I'll bind it with my shirt.

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. What is the matter, ho? who is't that
cried?

Iago. Who is't that cried?

Bian. O my dear Cassio! my sweet Cassio!
O Cassio! Cassio! Cassio!

Iago. O notable strumpet!—Cassio, may you
suspect
Who they should be, that have thus mangled you?

Cas. No.

Gra. I am sorry to find you thus: I have been to
seek you.

Iago. Lend me a garter: so.—O, for a chair,
To bear him easily hence!

Bian. Alas, he faints.—O Cassio! Cassio! Cassio!

Iago. Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash
To be a party in this injury.—
Patience awhile, good Cassio.—Come, come:
Lend me a light.—Know we this face, or no?
Alas! my friend, and my dear countryman,
Roderigo? no: yes, sure:—O heaven! Roderigo.

Gra. What, of Venice?

Iago. Even he, sir: did you know him?

Gra. Know him? ay.

Iago. Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle
pardon:

These bloody accidents must excuse my manners.

That so neglected you.

Gra. I am glad to see you.

Iago. How do you, Cassio?—O, a chair, a chair!

Gra. Roderigo!

Iago. He, he, 'tis he:—O, that's well said:—
the chair.— [*a chair brought in.*]

Some good man bear him carefully from hence;

I'll fetch the general's surgeon.—For you, mistress,
[*to Bianca.*]

Save you your labor.—He that lies slain here,
Cassio,

Was my dear friend: what malice was between
you?

Cas. None in the world; nor do I know the man.

Iago. [*to Bian.*] What, look you pale?—O, bear
him out o' the air.—

[*Cassio and Roderigo are borne off.*]

Stay you, good gentlewoman.—Look you pale, mis-
tress?

Do you perceive the guestness of her eye?—

Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon.—

Behold her well; I pray you, look upon her:

Do you see, gentlemen? nay, guiltiness will speak,

Though tongues were out of use.

Enter EMILIA.

Emi. 'Las, what's the matter? what's the matter,
husband?

Iago. Cassio hath here been set on in the dark
By Roderigo, and fellows that are scaped:

He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

Emi. Alas, good gentleman! alas, good Cassio!

Iago. This is the fruit of whoring.—Pr'ythee Emilia,

Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night.

What, do you shake at that?

Bian. He supp'd at my house; but I therefore shake not.

Iago. O, did he so? I charge you, go with me.

Emi. Fie, fie upon thee, strumpet!

Bian. I am no strumpet; but of life as honest
As you that thus abuse me.

Emi. As I? foh! fie upon thee!

Iago. Kind gentlemen, let's go see poor Cassio
dress'd.

Come, mistress, you must tell us another tale.

Emilia, run you to the citadel,

And tell my lord and lady what has happ'd.—

Will you go on, I pray?—This is the night, [*aside.*

That either makes me, or fordoes¹ me quite.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

*A bedchamber: DESDEMONA in bed asleep: a light
burning.*

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,—

¹ Undoes, ruins.

Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars!—
It is the cause. Yet I 'll not shed her blood;
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,
And smooth as monumental alabaster.

[takes off his sword.]

Yet she must die, else she 'll betray more men.
Put out the light, and then put out the light.¹
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me: but once put out thine,
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
I know not where is that Promethean heat,
That can thy light relume: when I have pluck'd thy
rose,

I cannot give it vital growth again;
It needs must wither:—I 'll smell it on the tree.

[kissing her.]

O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
Justice to break her sword!—one more, one more.
Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,
And love thee after:—one more, and this the last.
So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
But they are cruel tears: this sorrow 's heavenly;
It strikes where it doth love.—She wakes.

Des. Who 's there? Othello?

Oth.

Ay, Desdemona.

Des. Will you come to bed, my lord?

Oth. Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona?

¹ i. e. the light of life.



Graham del.

Sterling sc

OTHELLO

ACT IV SCENE II
A T. J. B. H.

Des. Ay, my lord.

Oth. If you bethink yourself of any crime,
Unreconciled as yet to heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.

Des. Alas, my lord, what may you mean by
that?

Oth. Well, do it, and be brief; I will walk by:
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit;
No,—Heaven forefend!—I would not kill thy soul.

Des. Talk you of killing?

Oth. Ay, I do.

Des. Then, Heaven
Have mercy on me!

Oth. Amen, with all my heart!

Des. If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.

Oth. Humph!

Des. And yet I fear you; for you are fatal then.
When your eyes roll so: why I should fear, I know
not,

Since guiltiness I know not; but yet, I feel, I fear.

Oth. Think on thy sins.

Des. They are loves I bear to you.

Oth. Ay, and for that thou diest.

Des. That death's unnatural that kills for
loving.—

Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip?
Some bloody passion shakes your very frame.
These are portents; but yet, I hope, I hope,

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They do not point on me.

Oth. Peace, and be still!

Des. I will so: what's the matter?

Oth. That handkerchief, which I so loved, and
gave thee,

Thou gavest to Cassio.

Des. No, by my life and soul;
Send for the man, and ask him.

Oth. Sweet soul, take heed,
Take heed of perjury: thou'rt on thy death-bed.

Des. Ay, but not yet to die.

Oth. Yes, presently:
Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;
For to deny each article with oath,
Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception,
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

Des. Then, Lord have mercy on me!

Oth. I say, Amen.

Des. And have you mercy too!—I never did
Offend you in my life; never loved Cassio,
But with such general warranty of Heaven
As I might love: I never gave him token.

Oth. By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in his
hand.

O perjured woman! thou dost stone my heart;
And makest me call, what I intend to do.
A murder, which I thought a sacrifice:
I saw the handkerchief.

Des. He found it then;
I never gave it him.—Send for him hither,
And let him confess a truth.

Dr. Wm. S. Lusk, Jr.
1000 1st St. N. W. Wash. D. C.
At V. 1000 1st St. N. W.

Oth. He hath confess'd.

Des. What, my lord?

Oth. That he hath—used thee.

Des. How? unlawfully?

Oth. Ay.

Des. He 'll not say so.

Oth. No, his mouth is stopp'd :
Honest Iago hath ta'en order for 't.

Des. My fear interprets then.—What, is he
dead?

Oth. Had all his hairs been lives, my great
revenge
Had stomach for them all.

Des. Alas! he is betray'd, and I undone.

Oth. Out, strumpet! Weep'st thou for him to
my face?

Des. O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not.

Oth. Down, strumpet!

Des. Kill me to-morrow; let me live to-night.

Oth. Nay, if you strive,——

Des. But half an hour.

Oth. Being done,
There is no pause.

Des. But while I say one prayer.

Oth. It is too late. [*he smothers her.*]

Emi. [*within.*] My lord, my lord! what ho! my
lord, my lord!

Oth. What noise is this?—Not dead, not yet
quite dead?

I. that am cruel, am yet merciful;

I would not have thee linger in thy pain.—

So,

Emi. [*within.*] What ho! my lord, my lord!

Oth. Who's there?

Emi. [*within.*] O, good my lord, I would speak a word with you.

Oth. Yes; 'tis Emilia:—by and by.—She's dead.

'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death.

The noise was high.—Ha! no more moving?

Still as the grave. Shall she come in? Were't good?

I think, she stirs again:—no.—What's the best?

If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife.—

My wife! my wife! what wife?—I have no wife.

O, insupportable! O, heavy hour!

Methinks, it should be now a huge eclipse

Of sun and moon; and that the affrighted globe

Should yawn at alteration.

Emi. [*within.*] I do beseech you I may speak with you,

O, good my lord!

Oth. I had forgot thee: O, come in, Emilia:—

Soft;—by and by:—let me the curtains draw.—

Where art thou? What's the matter with thee now?

[*unlocks the door.*]

Enter EMILIA.

Emi. O, good my lord, yonder's foul murder done.

Oth. What? now?

Emi. But now, my lord

Oth. It is the very error of the moon :
She comes more near the earth than she was wont,
And makes men mad.

Emi. Cassio, my lord, has kill'd a young Vene-
tian,
Call'd Roderigo.

Oth. Roderigo kill'd,
And Cassio kill'd ?

Emi. No, Cassio is not kill'd.

Oth. Not Cassio kill'd ? Then murder's out of
tune,

And sweet revenge grows harsh.

Des. O, falsely, falsely murder'd !

Emi. Alas ! what cry is that ?

Oth. That, what ?

Emi. Out, and alas ! that was my lady's voice :—
Help ! help, ho ! help !—O lady, speak again !
Sweet Desdemona ! O, sweet mistress, speak !

Des. A guiltless death I die.

Emi. O, who hath done
This deed ?

Des. Nobody ; I myself : farewell.
Commend me to my kind lord : O, farewell. [*dies.*

Oth. Why, how should she be murder'd ?

Emi. Alas, who knows ?

Oth. You heard her say herself, it was not I.

Emi. She said so ; I must needs report the truth.

Oth. She's, like a liar, gone to burning hell :
'Twas I that kill'd her.

Emi. O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil !

Oth. She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.

Emi. Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.

Oth. She was false as water.

Emi. Thou art rash as fire, to say
That she was false: O, she was heavenly true!

Oth. Cassio did tup her; ask thy husband else.
O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell,
But that I did proceed upon just grounds
To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.

Emi. My husband?

Oth. Thy husband.

Emi. That she was false to wedlock?

Oth. Ay, with Cassio
Nay, had she been true,
If Heaven would make me such another world
Of one intire and perfect chrysolite,¹
I'd not have sold her for it.

Emi. My husband?

Oth. Ay, 'twas he that told me first:
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.

Emi. My husband?

Oth. What needs this iteration,² woman? I say,
thy husband.

Emi. O mistress, villany hath made mocks with
love!—³

My husband say, that she was false?

¹ A precious stone.

² Repetition.

³ 'i. e. villany has taken advantage to play on the weakness
of a violent passion.'—Johnson.

Oth. He, woman :
I say, thy husband. Dost understand the word ?
My friend, thy husband ; honest. honest Iago.

Emi. If he say so, may his pernicious soul
Rot half a grain a day ! he lies to the heart :
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.

Oth. Ha !

Emi. Do thy worst :
This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven,
Than thou wast worthy her.

Oth. Peace ; you were best.

Emi. Thou hast not half the power to do me
harm,
As I have to be hurt.¹ O gull ! O dolt !
As ignorant as dirt ! thou hast done a deed,——
I care not for thy sword ; I 'll make thee known,
Though I lost twenty lives.—Help ! help, ho ! help !
The Moor has kill'd my mistress : murder ! murder !

Enter MONTANO, GRATIANO, *and* IAGO.

Mon. What is the matter ?—How now, general ?

Emi. O, are you come, Iago ? you have done
well,
That men must lay their murders on your neck !

Gra. What is the matter ?

Emi. Disprove this villain, if thou be 'st a man.
He says, thou told'st him that his wife was false :
I know, thou didst not ; thou 'rt not such a villain.

¹ i. e. more can I bear than you dare execute.

Speak, for my heart is full.

Iago. I told him what I thought; and told no
more

Than what he found himself was apt and true.

Emi. But did you ever tell him she was false?

Iago. I did.

Emi. You told a lie; an odious, damned lie,
Upon my soul, a lie; a wicked lie.—

She false with Cassio?—did you say, with Cassio?

Iago. With Cassio, mistress: go to; charm your
tongue.

Emi. I will not charm my tongue; I am bound
to speak:

My mistress here lies murder'd in her bed.

All. O, Heavens forefend! ¹

Emi. And your reports have set the murder on.

Oth. Nay, stare not, masters; it is true, indeed.

Gra. 'Tis a strange truth.

Mon. O monstrous act!

Emi. Villany, villany, villany!—

I think upon 't,—I think,—I smell 't.—O villany!

I thought so then;—I'll kill myself for grief.—

O villany, villany!

Iago. What, are you mad? I charge you, get you
home.

Emi. Good gentlemen, let me have leave to
speak:

'Tis proper I obey him, but not now.

¹ Forbid.

Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.

Oth. O! O! O! [*hanging over his wife.*

Emi. Nay, lay thee down, and roar;
For thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent,
That e'er did lift up eye.

Oth. O, she was foul!— [*rising.*
I scarce did know you, uncle: there lies your
niece,
Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly
stopp'd.

I know, this act shows horrible and grim.

Gra. Poor Desdemona! I am glad thy father's
dead:

Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief
Shore his old thread in twain: did he live now,
This sight would make him do a desperate turn;
Yea, curse his better angel from his side,
And fall to reprobation.

Oth. 'Tis pitiful: but yet Iago knows,
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame
A thousand times committed; Cassio confess'd it:
And she did gratify his amorous works
With that recognisance and pledge of love
Which I first gave her; I saw it in his hand:
It was a handkerchief, an antique token
My father gave my mother.

Emi. O heaven! O heavenly powers!

Iago. Come, hold your peace.

Emi. 'Twill out, 'twill out:—I hold my peace,
sir? no:

Re-enter GRATIANO.

is the matter?

Behold! I have a weapon
 did itself sustain
 's thigh: I have seen the day,
 's little arm, and this good sword,
 y way through more impediments
 imes your stop.—But, O vain boast!
 'ol his fate? 'tis not so now.—
 though you do see me weapon'd:
 rney's end, here is my butt,
 ark of my utmost sail.
 k dismay'd? 'tis a lost fear;
 a against Othello's breast,
 —Where should Othello go?—
 at thou look now? O ill-starr'd
 h!
 ock! when we shall meet at compt,
 ine will hurt my soul from heaven,
 ill snatch at it.—Cold, cold, my

chastity.—

ed slave!—Whip me, ye devils,
 ssion of this heavenly sight!

in winds! roast me in sulphur!
 eep-down gulfs of liquid fire!—

' Desdemona! dead?

! O!

Enter LODOVICO, MONTANO, CASSIO *carried in a chair, and Officers, with* IAGO, *prisoner.*

Lo. Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

Oth. That's he, that was Othello: here I am.

Lo. Where is that viper? bring the villain forth.

Oth. I look down towards his feet; ¹—but that's a fable;

If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.

[Othello wounds Iago.]

Lo. Wrench his sword from him.

Iago. I bleed, sir; but not kill'd.

Oth. I am not sorry neither: I'd have thee live; For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die.

Lo. O thou Othello, that was once so good,
Fallen in the practice ² of a cursed slave;—
What shall be said to thee?

Oth. Why, any thing:
An honorable murderer, if you will;
For naught I did in hate, but all in honor.

Lo. This wretch hath part confess'd his villany.—
Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?

Oth. Ay.

Cas. Dear general, I never gave you cause.

Oth. I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.
Will you, I pray you, demand that demi-devil,

¹ i. e. to see if his feet be cloven.

² By the stratagem.

Why he hath thus ensnared my soul and body?

Iago. Demand me nothing: what you know, you know.

From this time forth I never will speak word.

Lo. What? not to pray?

Gra. Torments will ope your lips.

Oth. Well, thou dost best.

Lo. Sir, you shall understand what hath befallen,
Which, as I think, you know not: here is a letter,
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo;
And here another: the one of them imports
The death of Cassio to be undertook
By Roderigo.

Oth. O villain!

Cas. Most heathenish, and most gross!

Lo. Now here's another discontented paper,
Found in his pocket too; and this, it seems,
Roderigo meant to have sent this damned villain;
But that, belike, Iago in the interim
Came in and satisfied him.

Oth. O the pernicious caitiff!—
How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's?

Cas. I found it in my chamber:
And he himself confess'd, but even now,
That there he dropp'd it, for a special purpose,
Which wrought to his desire.

Oth. O fool! fool! fool!

Cas. There is, besides, in Roderigo's letter,—
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him
Brave me upon the watch; whereon it came

That I was cast : and even but now he spake,
After long seeming dead,—Iago hurt him,
Iago set him on.

I.o. You must forsake this room, and go with us :
Your power and your command is taken off,
And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,—
If there be any cunning cruelty,
That can torment him much, and hold him long,
It shall be his : you shall close prisoner rest,
Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian state.—Come, bring him away.

Oth. Soft you ; a word or two before you go.
I have done the state some service, and they know
it ;

No more of that.—I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am ; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice : then must you
speak

Of one, that loved not wisely, but too well ;
Of one, not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
Perplex'd in the extreme ; of one, whose hand,
Like the base Judean, threw a pearl away
Richer than all his tribe ; of one, whose subdued
eyes,

Albeit unused to the melting mood,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their medicinal gum : set you down this :
And say, besides, that in Aleppo once,
Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
Beat a Venetian, and traduced the state,

I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
And smote him—thus. *[stabs himself.]*

Lo. O bloody period!

Gra. All that 's spoke is marr'd.

Oth. I kiss'd thee ere I kill'd thee:—no way but
this;— *[falling upon Desdemona.]*

Killing myself, to die upon a kiss. *[dies.]*

Cas. This did I fear, but thought he had no
weapon;

For he was great of heart.

Lo. O Spartan dog.

More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!

Look on the tragic loading of this bed; *[to Iago.]*

This is thy work: the object poisons sight;—

Let it be hid.—Gratiano, keep the house,

And seise upon the fortunes of the Moor,

For they succeed to you.—To you, lord governor,

Remains the censure¹ of this hellish villain;

The time, the place, the torture;—O, enforce it!

Myself will straight aboard, and to the state

This heavy act with heavy heart relate. *[Exeunt.]*

¹ Sentence.

THE
PLAYS AND POEMS
OF
SHAKESPEARE.

VOL. XV.

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THE
PLAYS AND POEMS
OF
SHAKESPEARE.

WITH
ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY ILLUSTRATIONS,
FROM DESIGNS BY EMINENT ARTISTS.

EDITED BY
A. J. VALPY, A.M.,
FELLOW OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD.

IN FIFTEEN VOLUMES.

VOL. XV.

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1878.

Shakspeare has the decisive merit of having furnished more passages which dwell on the memory, and are applicable to common occasions, than any other writer of his country, probably than any extant writer in the whole range of literature. These choice products of his genius are culled by the English reader with scarcely any interruption from the gross matter, in which, like pure gold in its matrix, they are often imbedded : and I do not think it is exaggerating the effect of poetry, to suppose that the characteristic English manliness of thought has been greatly indebted to him for its preservation, amid prevailing luxury and fashionable frivolity.

DR. AIKIN.

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HISTORICAL NOTICE
OF
VENUS AND ADONIS.

This poem, which our author himself has informed us was his first composition, was entered on the books of the Stationers' Company, April 18th, 1593, and is frequently alluded to by his contemporaries. 'As the soul of Euphorbus,' says Meres, in his Wit's Treasury, 1598, 'was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the sweet, witty soul of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakspeare. Witness his Venus and Adonis, his Lucrece,' &c. Shakspeare had without doubt read the account of Venus and Adonis in the tenth book of Ovid's Metamorphoses translated by Golding, 1567, though he has chosen to deviate from the classical story, which Ovid and Spenser had set before him, following probably the model presented to him by a short piece intituled 'The Sheepheard's Song of Venus and Adonis,' supposed by Malone to have been the production of Henry Constable, and published some time previous to the appearance of this poem; although no earlier copy of it can now be found than that contained in England's Helicon, 1600.

THE EPISTLE.

TO THE

RIGHT HONORABLE HENRY WRIOTHESLY,
EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON, AND BARON OF TICHFIELD,

RIGHT HONORABLE,

I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burthen: only, if your honor seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honored you with some graver labor. But if the first beir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather, and never after ear¹ so barren a land, for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your honorable survey, and your honor to your heart's content; which I wish may always answer your own wish, and the world's hopeful expectation.

Your honor's in all duty,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

¹ Plough.

Starting at

VENUS AND AIRONES.

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VENUS AND ADONIS.

ARGUMENT.

Venus in vain endeavors to inspire her favorite Adonis with a mutual passion, and to dissuade him from a too eager pursuit of the pleasures of the chase. The youth rejects the overtures, and disregards the advice of the goddess, and is mortally wounded by a wild boar : his body is changed into a flower called anemone by his disconsolate mistress, who, after tenderly lamenting his untimely death, is conveyed in the clouds to Paphos.

EVEN as the sun with purple-color'd face
Had ta'en his last leave of the weeping morn,
Rose-cheek'd Adonis hied him to the chase ;
Hunting he loved, but love he laugh'd to scorn :
Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain unto him,
And like a bold-faced suitor 'gins to woo him.

' Thrice fairer than myself,' thus she began,
' The field's chief flower, sweet above compare,
Stain to all nymphs, more lovely than a man,
More white and red than doves or roses are ;
Nature that made thee, with herself at strife,
Saith that the world hath ending with thy life.

‘ Vouchsafe, thou wonder, to alight thy steed,
And rein his proud head to the saddle-bow :
If thou wilt deign this favor, for thy meed,
A thousand honey secrets shalt thou know.

Here come and sit, where never serpent hisses,
And, being set, I’ll smother thee with kisses ;

‘ And yet not cloy thy lips with loathed satiety,
But rather famish them amid their plenty,
Making them red and pale with fresh variety,
Ten kisses short as one, one long as twenty :

A summer’s day will seem an hour but short,
Being wasted in such time-beguiling sport.’

With this, she seiseth on his sweating palm,
The precedent of pith and livelihood,
And, trembling in her passion, calls it balm,
Earth’s sovereign salve to do a goddess good :
Being so enraged, desire doth lend her force,
Courageously to pluck him from his horse.

Over one arm the lusty courser’s rein,
Under her other was the tender boy,
Who blush’d and pouted in a dull disdain,
With leaden appetite, unapt to toy ;
She red and hot, as coals of glowing fire ;
He red for shame, but frosty in desire.

The studded bridle on a ragged bough
Nimbly she fastens ; (O, how quick is love !)

The steed is stalled up, and even now
To tie the rider she begins to prove :

Backward she push'd him, as she would be
thrust;

And govern'd him in strength, though not in
lust.

So soon was she along, as he was down,
Each leaning on their elbows and their hips :
Now doth she stroke his cheek, now doth he frown,
And 'gins to chide, but soon she stops his lips ;
And kissing speaks, with lustful language broken,
' If thou wilt chide, thy lips shall never open.'

He burns with bashful shame ; she with her tears
Doth quench the maiden burning of his cheeks ;
Then with her windy sighs and golden hairs,
To fan and blow them dry again she seeks :
He saith, she is immodest, blames her 'miss ;¹
What follows more, she murders with a kiss.

Even as an empty eagle, sharp by fast,
Tires² with her beak on feathers, flesh, and bone,
Shaking her wings, devouring all in haste,
Till either gorge be stuff'd, or prey be gone ;
Even so she kiss'd his brow, his cheek, his
chin ;
And where she ends, she doth anew begin.

¹ i. e. misbehavior.

² Tears, pecks.

Forced to content, but never to obey,
Panting he lies, and breatheth in her face :
She feedeth on the steam, as on a prey ;
And calls it heavenly moisture, air of grace ;
 Wishing her cheeks were gardens full of flowers.
 So they were dew'd with such distilling showers.

Look, how a bird lies tangled in a net,
So fasten'd in her arms Adonis lies ;
Pure shame and awed resistance made him fret,
Which bred more beauty in his angry eyes :
 Rain, added to a river that is rank,¹
 Perforce will force it overflow the bank.

Still she entreats, and prettily entreats,
For to a pretty ear she tunes her tale ;
Still is he sullen, still he lowers and frets,
'Twixt crimson shame, and anger ashy-pale :
 Being red, she loves him best ; and being white,
 Her best is better'd with a more delight.

Look how he can, she cannot choose but love ;
And by her fair immortal hand she swears
From his soft bosom never to remove,
'Till he take truce with her contending tears,
 Which long have rain'd, making her cheeks all
 wet ;
And one sweet kiss shall pay this countless debt.

¹ i. e. full.

Upon this promise did he raise his chin.
Like a dive-dapper peering through a wave,
Who being look'd on, ducks as quickly in ;
So offers he to give what she did crave ;
But when her lips were ready for his pay,
He winks, and turns his lips another way.

Never did passenger, in summer's heat,
More thirst for drink, than she for this good turn :
Her help she sees, but help she cannot get ;
She bathes in water, yet her fire must burn.
' O, pity,' 'gan she cry, ' flint-hearted boy !
'Tis but a kiss I beg : why art thou coy ?

' I have been woo'd, as I entreat thee now,
Even by the stern and direful god of war,
Whose sinewy neck in battle ne'er did bow ;
Who conquers where he comes, in every jar :
Yet hath he been my captive and my slave.
And begg'd for that which thou unask'd shalt
have.

' Over my altars hath he hung his lance,
His batter'd shield, his uncontrolled crest ;
And for my sake hath learn'd to sport and dance,
To toy, to wanton, dally, smile, and jest ;
Scorning his churlish drum, and ensign red ;
Making my arms his field, his tent my bed.

' Thus he that over-ruled, I oversway'd,
Leading him prisoner in a red-rose chain :

Strong-temper'd steel his stronger strength obey'd,
Yet was he servile to my coy disdain.

O, be not proud, nor brag not of thy might,
For mastering her that foil'd the god of fight!

' Touch but my lips with those fair lips of thine,
(Though mine be not so fair, yet are they red)
The kiss shall be thine own as well as mine:—
What seest thou in the ground? hold up thy
head:

Look in mine eyeballs; there thy beauty lies:
Then why not lips on lips, since eyes in eyes?

' Art thou ashamed to kiss? then wink again,
And I will wink; so shall the day seem night:
Love keeps his revels where there are but twain:
Be bold to play; our sport is not in sight:
These blue-vein'd violets, whereon we lean,
Never can blab, nor know not what we mean.

' The tender spring upon thy tempting lip
Shows thee unripe; yet mayst thou well be tasted:
Make use of time; let not advantage slip:
Beauty within itself should not be wasted:
Fair flowers, that are not gather'd in their prime,
Rot and consume themselves in little time.

' Were I hard-favor'd, foul, or wrinkled-old,
Ill-nurtured, crooked, churlish, harsh in voice,
O'er-worn, despised, rheumatic and cold,
Thick-sighted, barren, lean, and lacking juice,

Then mightst thou pause, for then I were not
for thee ;

But having no defects, why dost abhor me ?

‘ Thou canst not see one wrinkle in my brow ,
Mine eyes are gray.¹ and bright, and quick in
turning ;

My beauty as the spring doth yearly grow ;

My flesh is soft and plump, my marrow burning :

My smooth moist hand, were it with thy hand
felt,

Would in thy palm dissolve, or seem to melt.

‘ Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear ;

Or, like a fairy, trip upon the green ;

Or, like a nymph, with long dishevell’d hair,

Dance on the sands, and yet no footing seen.

Love is a spirit all compact of fire ;

Not gross to sink, but light, and will aspire.

‘ Witness this primrose bank whereon I lie :

These forceless flowers like sturdy trees support me ;

Two strengthless doves will draw me through the
sky,

From morn to night, even where I list to sport me.

Is love so light, sweet boy ; and may it be,

That thou shouldst think it heavy unto thee ?

¹ What we now call blue eyes, were in Shakspeare's time called gray.

' Is thine own heart to thine own face affected ?
Can thy right hand seise love upon thy left ?
Then woo thyself, be of thyself rejected,
Steal thine own freedom, and complain on theft.
Narcissus so himself himself forsook,
And died to kiss his shadow in the brook.

' Torches are made to light, jewels to wear,
Dainties to taste, fresh beauty for the use,
Herbs for their smell, and sappy plants to bear :
Things growing to themselves are growth's abuse.
Seeds spring from seeds, and beauty breedeth
beauty :
Thou wast begot ;—to get it is thy duty.

' Upon the earth's increase why shouldst thou feed,
Unless the earth with thy increase be fed ?
By law of Nature thou art bound to breed,
That thine may live when thou thyself art dead ;
And so in spite of death thou dost survive,
In that thy likeness still is left alive.'

By this, the love-sick queen began to sweat,
For, where they lay, the shadow had forsook them ;
And 'Titan, tired¹ in the midday heat,
With burning eye did hotly overlook them ;
Wishing Adonis had his team to guide,
So he were like him, and by Venus' side.

¹ For attired.

And now Adonis, with a lazy spright,
And with a heavy, dark, disliking eye,
His lowering brows o'erwhelming his fair sight,
Like misty vapors, when they blot the sky,
Souring his cheeks, cries. 'Fie, no more of love!
The sun doth burn my face; I must remove.'

'Ah me!' quoth Venus, 'young, and so unkind?
What bare excuses makest thou to be gone!
I'll sigh celestial breath, whose gentle wind
Shall cool the heat of this descending sun:
I'll make a shadow for thee of my hairs;
If they burn too, I'll quench them with my
tears.'

'The sun that shines from heaven, shines but warm;
And, lo, I lie between that sun and thee:
The heat I have from thence doth little harm;
Thine eye darts forth the fire that burneth me:
And were I not immortal, life were done,
Between this heavenly and earthly sun.'

'Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as steel?
Nay, more than flint, for stone at rain relenteth:
Art thou a woman's son, and canst not feel
What 'tis to love? how want of love tormenteth?
O, had thy mother borne so hard a mind,
She had not brought forth thee, but died un-
kind.'

¹ Without children.

VENUS AND ADONIS.

that thou shouldst condemn me this?
at danger dwells upon my suit?
thy lips the worse for one poor kiss?
but speak fair words, or else be mute:
no kiss; I 'll give it thee again;
or interest, if thou wilt have twain.

picture, cold and senseless stone,
idol, image, dull and dead,
nothing but the eye alone;
man, but of no woman bred:
no man, though of a man's com-
pexion;
will kiss even by their own direction."

patience chokes her pleading tongue,
passion doth provoke a pause:
and fiery eyes blaze forth her wrong:
in love, she cannot right her cause:
she weeps, and now she fain would
speak,
her sobs do her intendments¹ break.

he shakes her head, and then his hand;
he on him, now on the ground;
her arms infold him like a band;
she will not in her arms be bound;
from thence he struggles to be gone,
her lily fingers, one in one.

¹ Intentions.

‘Fondling,’ she saith, ‘since I have hemm’d thee
here,

Within the circuit of this ivory pale,
I’ll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer ;
Feed where thou wilt, on mountain or in dale :
Graze on my lips ; and, if those hills be dry.
Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie.

‘ Within this limit is relief enough ;
Sweet bottom-grass, and high delightful plain,
Round rising hillocks, brakes obscure and rough,
To shelter thee from tempest and from rain :
Then be my deer, since I am such a park ;
No dog shall rouse thee, though a thousand
bark.’

At this Adonis smiles, as in disdain,
That in each cheek appears a pretty dimple :
Love made those hollows, if himself were slain,
He might be buried in a tomb so simple ;
Foreknowing well, if there he came to lie,
Why there Love lived, and there he could not
die.

These lovely caves, these round enchanting pits,
Open’d their mouths to swallow Venus’ liking :
Being mad before, how doth she now for wits ?
Struck dead at first, what needs a second striking ?
Poor queen of love, in thine own law forlorn,
To love a cheek that smiles at thee in scorn !

Now which way shall she turn? what shall she
say?

Her words are done, her woes the more increasing:
The time is spent, her object will away,
And from her twining arms doth urge releasing.

‘Pity!’ she cries; ‘some favor! some remorse!’
Away he springs, and hasteth to his horse.

But, lo, from forth a copse that neighbors by,
A breeding jennet, lusty, young, and proud,
Adonis’ trampling courser doth espy,
And forth she rushes, snorts, and neighs aloud:
The strong-neck’d steed, being tied unto a tree,
Breaketh his rein, and to her straight goes he.

Imperiously he leaps, he neighs, he bounds,
And now his woven girths he breaks asunder;
The bearing earth with his hard hoof he wounds,
Whose hollow womb resounds like heaven’s thun-
der:

The iron bit he crusheth ’tween his teeth,
Controlling what he was controlled with.

His ears up prick’d; his braided hanging mane
Upon his compass’d² crest now stand on end;
His nostrils drink the air, and forth again,
As from a furnace, vapors doth he send:

¹ Remorse is here used for tenderness.
² Arched.

**His eye, which scornfully glisters like fire.
Shows his hot courage and his high desire.**

**Sometime he trots, as if he told the steps,
With gentle majesty and modest pride ;
Anon he rears upright, curvets and leaps,
As who should say, Lo ! thus my strength is tried ;
And this I do to captivate the eye
Of the fair breeder that is standing by.**

**What recketh he his rider's angry stir,
His flattering holla, or his ' Stand, I say ? '
What cares he now for curb, or pricking spur ?
For rich caparisons, or trapping gay ?
He sees his love, and nothing else he sees,
For nothing else with his proud sight agrees.**

**Look, when a painter would surpass the life,
In limning out a well-proportion'd steed,
His art with nature's workmanship at strife,
As if the dead the living should exceed ;
So did this horse excel a common one,
In shape, in courage, color, pace, and bone.**

**Round-hoof'd, short-jointed, fetlocks shag and long,
Broad breast, full eye, small head, and nostril wide,
High crest, short ears, straight legs, and passing
strong,**

**Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide :
Look, what a horse should have, he did not lack,
Save a proud rider on so proud a back.**

To note the fighting conflict of her hue?
How white and red each other did destroy?
But now, her cheek was pale; and by and by
It flash'd forth fire, as lightning from the sky.

Now was she just before him as he sat,
And like a lowly lover down she kneels;
With one fair hand she heaveth up his hat,
Her other tender hand his fair cheek feels:
His tenderer cheek receives her soft hand's print,
As apt as new-fallen snow takes any dint.

O, what a war of looks was then between them!
Her eyes, petitioners, to his eyes suing;
His eyes saw her eyes as they had not seen them;
Her eyes woo'd still, his eyes disdain'd the wooing:
And all this dumb play had his¹ acts made plain
With tears, which, chorus-like, her eyes did rain.

Full gently now she takes him by the hand,
A lily prison'd in a jail of snow,
Or ivory in an alabaster band;
So white a friend engirts so white a foe:
This beauteous combat, wilful and unwilling,
Show'd like two silver doves that sit a billing.

Once more the engine of her thoughts began:—
• O fairest mover on this mortal round,

• Its,

Would thou wert as I am, and I a man ;
My heart all whole as thine, thy heart my wound ;¹
For one sweet look thy help I would assure thee,
Though nothing but my body's bane would cure
thee.'

' Give me my hand,' saith he : ' why dost thou
feel it ? '

' Give me my heart,' saith she, ' and thou shalt
have it :

O, give it me, lest thy hard heart do steel it,
And being steel'd, soft sighs can never grave it :
Then love's deep groans I never shall regard,
Because Adonis' heart hath made mine hard.'

' For shame,' he cries : ' let go, and let me go :
My day's delight is past, my horse is gone ;
And 'tis your fault I am bereft him so :
I pray you, hence, and leave me here alone :
For all my mind, my thought, my busy care,
Is how to get my palfrey from the mare.'

Thus she replies :—' Thy palfrey, as he should,
Welcomes the warm approach of sweet desire :
Affection is a coal that must be cool'd ;
Else, suffer'd, it will set the heart on fire :
The sea hath bounds, but deep desire hath none ;
Therefore no marvel though thy horse be gone.

¹ Thy heart wounded as mine is.

VENUS AND ADONIS.

ade he stood, tied to the tree.
er'd with a leathern rein ;
saw his love, his youth's fair fee,
petty bondage in disdain ;
he hese thong from his bending crest ;
og his mouth, his back, his breast.

True love in her naked bed,
sheets a whiter hue than white,
glutton eye so full hath fed,
its aim at like delight ?
aint, that dare not be so bold,
e fire, the weather being cold ?

ie thy courser, gentle boy ;
im, I heartily beseech thee,
tage on presented joy :
e dumb, yet his proceedings teach

ove ; the lesson is but plain ;
ade perfect, never lost again.'

ve,' quoth he, ' nor will not know

oar, and then I chase it :
orrow, and I will not owe it ;
is love but to disgrace it ;'

towards love is only a desire to render it

**For I have heard it is a life in death,
That laughs, and weeps, and all but with a
breath.**

**' Who wears a garment shapeless and unfinish'd ?
Who plucks the bud before one leaf put forth ?
If springing things be any jot diminish'd,
They wither in their prime, prove nothing worth.
The colt that's back'd and burthen'd being
young,
Loseth his pride, and never waxeth strong.**

**' You hurt my hand with wringing ; let us part,
And leave this idle theme, this bootless chat :
Remove your siege from my unyielding heart ;
To love's alarm it will not ope the gate.
Dismiss your vows, your feigned tears, your
flattery ;
For where a heart is hard, they make no battery.'**

**' What ! canst thou talk ? ' quoth she ; ' hast thou
a tongue ?
O, would thou hadst not, or I had no hearing !
Thy mermaid's voice hath done me double wrong ;
I had my load before, now press'd with bearing :
Melodious discord, heavenly tune harsh-sounding.
Ear's deep-sweet music, and heart's deep-sore
wounding.**

**' Had I no eyes, but ears, my ears would love
That inward beauty and invisible ;**

GENUS AND ADONIS.

thy outward parts would move
that were but sensible :
nor eyes nor ears, to hear nor see,
I in love, by touching thee.

Use of feeling were bereft me,
not see, nor hear, nor touch,
the very smell were left me,
I to thee be still as much ;
tillatory of thy face excelling
perfumed, that breedeth love by
g.

banquet wert thou to the taste,
feeder of the other four ?
I wish the feast might ever last,
I double-lock the door ;
that sour, unwelcome guest,
stealing in, disturb the feast ?

aby-color'd portal open'd,
each did honey passage yield ;
that ever yet betoken'd
man, tempest to the field,
herds, woe unto the birds,
oul flaws' to herdmen and to

are sudden blasts of wind

This ill presage advisedly she marketh :
Even as the wind is hush'd before it raineth,
Or as the wolf doth grin before he barketh,
Or as the berry breaks before it staineth ;
Or, like the deadly bullet of a gun,
His meaning struck her ere his words begun :

And at his look she flatly falleth down ;
For looks kill love, and love by looks reviveth :
A smile recures the wounding of a frown ;
But blessed bankrupt, that by love so thriveth !
The silly boy, believing she is dead,
Claps her pale cheek, till clapping makes it
red ;

And all-amazed brake off his late intent,
For sharply he did think to reprehend her,
Which cunning love did wittily prevent :
Fair fall the wit that can so well defend her !
For on the grass she lies as she were slain,
Till his breath breatheth life in her again.

He wrings her nose, he strikes her on the cheeks,
He bends her fingers, holds her pulses hard ;
He chafes her lips ; a thousand ways he seeks
To mend the hurt that his unkindness marr'd :
He kisses her ; and she, by her good will,
Will never rise, so he will kiss her still.

The night of sorrow now is turn'd to day :
Her two blue windows faintly she upheaveth,

Like the fair sun, when in his fresh array
He cheers the morn, and all the world relieveth ;
And as the bright sun glorifies the sky,
So is her face illumined with her eye ;

Whose beams upon his hairless face are fix'd,
As if from thence they borrow'd all their shine.
Were never four such lamps together mix'd,
Had not his clouded with his brows' repine ;
But hers, which through the crystal tears gave
light,
Shone like the moon, in water seen by night.

' O, where am I ?' quoth she ; ' in earth or heaven,
Or in the ocean drench'd, or in the fire ?
What hour is this ? or morn, or weary even ?
Do I delight to die, or life desire ?
But now I lived, and life was death's annoy ;
But now I died, and death was lively joy.

' O, thou didst kill me ;—kill me once again :
'Thy eyes' shrewd tutor, that hard heart of thine,
Hath taught them scornful tricks, and such disdain,
That they have murder'd this poor heart of mine ;
And these mine eyes, true leaders to their queen,
But for thy piteous lips no more had seen.

' Long may they kiss each other, for this cure !
O, never let their crimson liveries wear !
And, as they last, their verdure still endure.
To drive infection from the dangerous year !

**That the star-gazers, having writ on death,
May say, the plague is banish'd by thy breath.**

**' Pure lips, sweet seals in my soft lips imprinted,
What bargains may I make, still to be sealing?
To sell myself I can be well contented,
So thou wilt buy, and pay, and use good dealing:
Which purchase if thou make, for fear of slips,¹
Set thy seal-manual on my wax-red lips.**

**' A thousand kisses buys my heart from me;
And pay them at thy leisure, one by one.
What is ten hundred touches unto thee?
Are they not quickly told, and quickly gone?
Say, for non-payment that the debt should
double,
Is twenty hundred kisses such a trouble?'**

**' Fair queen,' quoth he, ' if any love you owe me,
Measure my strangeness² with my unripe years;
Before I know myself, seek not to know me;
No fisher but the ungrown fry forbears:
The mellow plum doth fall, the green sticks fast;
Or, being early pluck'd, is sour to taste.**

**' Look, the world's comforter, with weary gait,
His day's hot task hath ended in the west:**

¹ Slips are counterfeit money.

² Bashfulness.

The owl, night's herald, shrieks ; 'tis very late :
The sheep are gone to fold, birds to their nest ;
And coal-black clouds, that shadow heaven's
light,
Do summon us to part, and bid good night.

' Now let me say, Good night, and so say you ;
If you will say so, you shall have a kiss.'
' Good night,' quoth she ; and, ere he says, Adieu,
The honey fee of parting tender'd is :
Her arms do lend his neck a sweet embrace ;
Incorporate then they seem ; face grows to face :

Till, breathless, he disjoin'd, and backward drew
The heavenly moisture, that sweet coral mouth,
Whose precious taste her thirsty lips well knew,
Whereon they surfeit, yet complain on drought :
He with her plenty press'd, she faint with dearth,
(Their lips together glued) fall to the earth.

Now quick Desire hath caught the yielding prey,
And glutton-like she feeds, yet never filleth :
Her lips are conquerors, his lips obey,
Paying what ransom the insulter willeth ;
Whose vulture thought doth pitch the price so
high,
That she will draw his lips' rich treasure dry :

And, having felt the sweetness of the spoil.
With blindfold fury she begins to forage ;

Her face doth reek and smoke, her blood doth boil,
And careless lust stirs up a desperate courage,
Planting oblivion, beating reason back,
Forgetting shame's pure blush, and honor's
wreck.

Hot, faint, and weary with her hard embracing,
Like a wild bird being tamed with too much
handling;
Or as the fleet-foot roe, that's tired with chasing,
Or like the froward infant, still'd with dandling;
He now obeys, and now no more resisteth,
While she takes all she can, not all she listeth.

What wax so frozen but dissolves with tempering,
And yields at last to every light impression?
Things out of hope are compass'd oft with ven-
turing,
Chiefly in love, whose leave¹ exceeds commission.
Affection faints not like a pale-faced coward;
But then woos best, when most his choice is
froward.

When he did frown, O, had she then gave over,
Such nectar from his lips she had not suck'd.
Foul words and frowns must not repel a lover:
What though the rose have prickles? yet 'tis
pluck'd.

¹ Licentiousness

Were beauty under twenty locks kept fast,
Yet Love breaks through, and picks them all at
last.

For pity now she can no more detain him;
The poor fool prays her that he may depart:
She is resolved no longer to restrain him;
Bids him farewell, and look well to her heart,
The which, by Cupid's bow she doth protest,
He carries thence encaged in his breast.

'Sweet boy,' she says, 'this night I'll waste in
sorrow,
For my sick heart commands mine eyes to watch.
'Tell me, Love's master, shall we meet to-morrow?
Say, shall we? shall we? wilt thou make the
match?'

He tells her, no; to-morrow he intends
To hunt the boar with certain of his friends.

'The boar!' quoth she; whereat a sudden pale,
Like lawn being spread upon the blushing rose,
Usurps her cheek; she trembles at his tale,
And on his neck her yoking arms she throws:
She sinketh down, still hanging by his neck;
He on her belly falls, she on her back.

Now is she in the very lists of love,
Her champion mounted for the hot encounter:
All is imaginary she doth prove;
He will not manage her, although he mount her;

That worse than Tantalus' is her annoy,
To clip¹ Elysium, and to lack her joy.

Even as poor birds, deceived with painted grapes,
Do surfeit by the eye, and pine the maw.
Even so she languisheth in her mishaps,
As those poor birds that helpless berries² saw :
The warm effects which she in him finds missing,
She seeks to kindle with continual kissing ;

But all in vain : good queen, it will not be :
She hath assay'd as much as may be proved :
Her pleading hath deserved a greater fee ;
She's Love, she loves, and yet she is not loved.
' Fie, fie ! ' he says : ' you crush me ; let me go :
You have no reason to withhold me so.'

' Thou hadst been gone,' quoth she, ' sweet boy, ere
this,
But that thou told'st me, thou wouldst hunt the
boar.
Come advised ! thou know'st not what it is
With javelin's point a churlish swine to gore,
Whose tushes never-sheathed he whetteth still
Like to a mortal³ butcher, bent to kill.

¹ Embrace.

² i. e. berries that afford no help or nourishment.

³ Deadly.

Whose blood upon the fresh flowers being shed,
Doth make them droop with grief, and hang the
head.

What should I do, seeing thee so indeed.
That tremble at the imagination?
The thought of it doth make my faint heart bleed.
And fear doth teach it divination :
I prophesy thy death, my living sorrow,
If thou encounter with the boar to-morrow.

‘ But if thou needs wilt hunt, be ruled by me ;
Uncouple at the timorous, flying hare ;
Or at the fox, which lives by subtilty ;
Or at the roe, which no encounter dare :
Pursue these fearful creatures o’er the downs,
And on thy well-breathed horse keep with thy
hounds :

‘ And when thou hast on foot the purblind hare,
Mark the poor wretch, to overshut¹ his troubles
How he outruns the wind, and with what care
He cranks² and crosses, with a thousand doubles.
The many musits³ through the which he goes,
Are like a labyrinth to amaze his foes.

‘ Sometime he runs among a flock of sheep,
To make the cunning hounds mistake their smell ;

¹ Conclude.

² Winds.

³ Musits are gaps in hedges.

And sometime where earth-delving conies keep,
To stop the loud pursuers in their yell ;
And sometime sorteth with a herd of deer :
Danger deviseth shifts ; wit waits on fear :

‘ For there his smell with others being mingled,
The hot scent-snuffing hounds are driven to doubt,
Ceasing their clamorous cry till they have singled,
With much ado, the cold fault cleanly out :

Then do they spend their mouths ; Echo replies,
As if another chase were in the skies.

‘ By this, poor Wat, far off upon a hill,
Stands on his hinder legs with listening ear,
To hearken if his foes pursue him still ;
Anon their loud alarums he doth hear ;

And now his grief may be compared well
To one sore-sick, that hears the passing-bell.

‘ Then shalt thou see the dew-bedabbled wretch
Turn, and return, indenting with the way ;
Each envious brier his weary legs doth scratch ,
Each shadow makes him stop, each murmur
stay :

For misery is trodden on by many ;
And, being low, never relieved by any.

‘ Lie quietly, and hear a little more ;
Nay, do not struggle, for thou shalt not rise :
To make thee hate the hunting of the boar,
Unlike myself thou hear’st me moralise,

Which by the rights of time thou needs must have,
If thou destroy them not in dark obscurity ?

If so, the world will hold thee in disdain,
Sith¹ in thy pride so fair a hope is slain.

‘ So in thyself thyself art made away :
A mischief worse than civil home-bred strife ;
Or theirs, whose desperate hands themselves do
slay ;

Or butcher-sire, that reaves his son of life.
Foul cankering rust the hidden treasure frets ;
But gold that’s put to use, more gold begets.’

‘ Nay, then,’ quoth Adon, ‘ you will fall again
Into your idle over-handled theme :
The kiss I gave you is bestow’d in vain,
And all in vain you strive against the stream :
For, by this black-faced night, desire’s foul
nurse,
Your treatise makes me like you worse and
worse.

‘ If love have lent you twenty thousand tongues,
And every tongue more moving than your own,
Bewitching like the wanton mermaid’s songs :
Yet from mine ear the tempting tune is blown :
For know, my heart stands armed in mine ear,
And will not let a false sound enter there ;

¹ Since.

• Lest the deceiving harmony should run
Into the quiet closure of my breast ;
And then my little heart were quite undone,
In his bedchamber to be barr'd of rest.

No, lady, no ; my heart longs not to groan ;
But soundly sleeps, while now it sleeps alone.

• What have you urged that I cannot reprove ?
The path is smooth that leadeth on to danger :
I hate not love ; but your device in love,
That lends embracements unto every stranger.

You do it for increase ; O, strange excuse !
When reason is the bawd to lust's abuse.

• Call it not love, for Love to heaven is fled,
Since sweating Lust on earth usurp'd his name :
Under whose simple semblance he hath fed
Upon fresh beauty, blotting it with blame ;
Which the hot tyrant stains, and soon bereaves,
As caterpillars do the tender leaves.

• Love comforteth, like sunshine after rain,
But lust's effect is tempest after sun ;
Love's gentle spring doth always fresh remain,
Lust's winter comes ere summer half be done.
Love surfeits not ; lust like a glutton dies :
Love is all truth ; lust full of forged lies.

• More I could tell, but more I dare not say :
The text is old, the orator too green.

Lo! here the gentle lark, weary of rest,
From his moist cabinet mounts up on high,
And wakes the morning, from whose silver breast
The sun ariseth in his majesty;
Who doth the world so gloriously behold,
That cedar-tops and hills seem burnish'd gold.

Venus salutes him with this fair good-morrow:—
'O thou clear god, and patron of all light,
From whom each lamp and shining star doth
borrow
The beauteous influence that makes him bright:
There lives a son, that suck'd an earthly mother,
May lend thee light, as thou dost lend to other.'

This said, she hasteth to a myrtle grove,
Musing the morning is so much o'erworn,
And yet she hears no tidings of her love:
She hearkens for his hounds and for his horn:
Anon she hears them chant it lustily,
And all in haste she coasteth¹ to the cry:

And as she runs, the bushes in the way,
Some catch her by the neck, some kiss her face,
Some twine about her thigh to make her stay:
She wildly breaketh from their strict embrace,
Like a milch doe, whose swelling dugs do ache,
Hasting to feed her fawn, hid in some brake.

¹ Advanceth.

By this, she hears the hounds are at a bay.
Whereat she starts, like one that spies an adder
Wreathed up in fatal folds, just in his way,
The fear whereof doth make him shake and shudder
Even so the timorous yelping of the hounds
Appals her senses, and her spright confounds :

For now she knows it is no gentle chase,
But the blunt boar, rough bear, or lion proud ;
Because the cry remaineth in one place,
Where fearfully the dogs exclaim aloud :
Finding their enemy to be so curst,¹
They all strain courtesy who shall cope him first.

This dismal cry rings sadly in her ear,
Through which it enters to surprise her heart,
Who, overcome by doubt and bloodless fear,
With cold-pale weakness numbs each feeling part :
Like soldiers, when their captain once doth yield,
They basely fly, and dare not stay the field.

Thus stands she in a trembling ecstasy ;
Till, cheering up her senses sore dismay'd,
She tells them, 'tis a causeless fantasy,
And childish error, that they are afraid :
Bids them leave quaking, bids them fear no
more ;—
And with that word she spied the hunted boar ;

¹ Mischievous, malicious.

1. With the power of
The sea and the wind
The waves are breaking
The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking

2. The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking

3. The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking

4. The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking
The sea is breaking

poor people are amazed
 and prodigies,
 eyes they long have gazed,
 sadful prophecies ;
 signs draws up her breath,
 and, exclaims on Death :—

ugly, meagre, lean,
 ' (thus chides she Death)
 thou, earth's worm, what dost

to steal his breath ;
 his breath and beauty set
 nigh to the violet ?

O ; it cannot be,
 thou shouldst strike at it :—
 hast no eyes to see ;
 dost thou hit.
 No ; but thy false dart
 , and cleaves an infant's

 aware, then he had spoke ;
 and, dearing him, thy power had lost his power.
 The Destinies will curse thee for this stroke :
 They bid thee crop a weed, thou pluck'st a flower :
 Love's golden arrow at him should have fled ;
 And not death's ebon dart, to strike him
 dead.

‘Dost thou drink tears, that thou provokest such weeping?’

What may a heavy groan advantage thee?

Why hast thou cast into eternal sleeping

Those eyes that taught all other eyes to see?

Now Nature cares not for thy mortal ¹ vigor,

Since her best work is ruin’d with thy rigor.’

Here overcome, as one full of despair,

She vail’d ² her eyelids, who, like sluices, stopp’d

The crystal tide, that from her two cheeks fair

In the sweet channel of her bosom dropp’d;

But through the floodgates breaks the silver rain.

And with his strong course opens them again.

O, how her eyes and tears did lend and borrow!

Her eyes seen in the tears, tears in her eye;

Both crystals, where they view’d each other’s
sorrow;—

Sorrow, that friendly sighs sought still to dry;

But like a stormy day, now wind, now rain,

Sighs dry her cheeks, tears make them wet again.

Variable passions throng her constant woe,

As striving who should best become her grief:

All entertain’d each passion labors so,

That every present sorrow seemeth chief.

¹ Deadly.

² Lowered.

But none is best : then join they all together,
Like many clouds consulting for foul weather.

By this, far off she hears some huntsman holla ;
A nurse's song ne'er pleased her babe so well .
The dire imagination she did follow
This sound of hope doth labor to expel ;
For now reviving joy bids her rejoice,
And flatters her it is Adonis' voice :

Whereat her tears began to turn their tide,
Being prison'd in her eye, like pearls in glass
Yet sometimes falls an orient drop beside,
Which her cheek melts, as scorning it should
pass,
To wash the foul face of the sluttish ground,
Who is but drunken when she seemeth drown'd.

O hard-believing love, how strange it seems
Not to believe, and yet too credulous !
Thy weal and woe are both of them extremes ;
Despair and hope make thee ridiculous :
The one doth flatter thee in thoughts unlikely ;
In likely thoughts the other kills thee quickly.

Now she unweaves the web that she has
wrought ;
Adonis lives, and Death is not to blame ;
It was not she that call'd him all to naught ;
Now she adds honors to his hateful name ;

Who, like a king perplexed in his throne,
By their suggestion gives a deadly groan ;

Whereat each tributary subject quakes ;
As when the wind, imprison'd in the ground,
Struggling for passage, earth's foundation shakes,
Which with cold terror doth men's minds confound :

This mutiny each part doth so surprise,
That from their dark beds once more leap her eyes ;

And, being open'd, threw unwilling light
Upon the wide wound that the boar had trench'd¹
In his soft flank ; whose wonted lily white
With purple tears, that his wound wept, was
drench'd :

No flower was nigh, no grass, herb, leaf, or
weed,
But stole his blood, and seem'd with him to
bleed.

This solemn sympathy poor Venus noteth ;
Over one shoulder doth she hang her head ;
Dumbly she passions, frantically she doteth ;
She thinks he could not die, he is not dead.

Her voice is stopp'd, her joints forget to bow :
Her eyes are mad that they have wept till now.

¹ Cut.

Upon his hurt she looks so steadfastly,
That her sight dazzling makes the wound seem
three ;

And then she reprehends her mangling eye,
'That makes more gashes where no breach should
be :

His face seems twain. each several limb is
doubled ;

For oft the eye mistakes, the brain being
troubled.

' My tongue cannot express my grief for one ;
And yet,' quoth she, ' behold two Adons dead !
My sighs are blown away, my salt tears gone,
Mine eyes are turn'd to fire, my heart to lead.

Heavy heart's lead, melt at mine eyes' red
fire !

So shall I die by drops of hot desire.

' Alas, poor world, what treasure hast thou lost !
What face remains alive that 's worth the viewing ?
Whose tongue is music now ? what canst thou
boast

Of things long since, or any thing ensuing ?

'The flowers are sweet, their colors fresh and
trim ;

But true-sweet beauty lived and died with him.

' Bonnet nor veil henceforth no creature wear !
Nor sun nor wind will ever strive to kiss you :

Having no fair¹ to lose, you need not fear ;
'The sun doth scorn you, and the wind doth hiss
you :

But when Adonis lived, sun and sharp air
Lurk'd like two thieves, to rob him of his
fair ;

' And therefore would he put his bonnet on,
Under whose brim the gaudy sun would peep ;
The wind would blow it off, and, being gone,
Play with his locks ; then would Adonis weep :
And, straight, in pity of his tender years,
'They both would strive who first should dry his
tears.

' To see his face, the lion walk'd along
Behind some hedge, because he would not fear²
him :

To recreate himself, when he hath sung,
The tiger would be tame, and gently hear him :
If he had spoke, the wolf would leave his prey,
And never fright the silly lamb that day.

' When he beheld his shadow in the brook,
The fishes spread on it their golden gills ;
When he was by, the birds such pleasure took,
That some would sing, some other in their tills

¹ Beauty

² Terrify.

Would bring him mulberries, and ripe-red cherries :

He fed them with his sight, they him with berries.

• But this foul, grim, and urchin-snouted¹ boar.
Whose downward eye still looketh for a grave,
Ne'er saw the beauteous livery that he wore :
Witness the entertainment that he gave.
If he did see his face, why, then I know,
He thought to kiss him, and hath kill'd him so.

• 'Tis true, 'tis true ; thus was Adonis slain :
He ran upon the boar with his sharp spear.
Who did not whet his teeth at him again,
But by a kiss thought to persuade him there ;
And, nuzzling in his flank, the loving swine
Sheathed, unaware, the tusk in his soft groin.

• Had I been tooth'd like him, I must confess,
With kissing him I should have kill'd him first ;
But he is dead, and never did he bless
My youth with his ; the more am I accursed.'
With this she falleth in the place she stood,
And stains her face with his congealed blood.

She looks upon his lips, and they are pale ;
She takes him by the hand, and that is cold ;

¹ i. e. snouted like a hedgehog.

She whisper in his ears a heavy tale,
As if they heard the woful words she told :
She lifts the coffer-lids that close his eyes,
Where, lo ! two lamps, burnt out in darkness
lies :

Two glasses, where herself herself beheld
A thousand times, and now no more reflect ;
Their virtue lost, wherein they late excell'd ;
And every beauty robb'd of his effect.

‘ Wonder of time,’ quoth she, ‘ this is my
spite ;
That, you being dead, the day should yet be
light.

‘ Since thou art dead, lo ! here I prophecy,
Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend ;
It shall be waited on with jealousy ;
Find sweet beginning, but unsavory end ;
Ne’er settled equally, but high or low ;
That all love’s pleasure shall not match his
woe :

‘ It shall be fickle, false, and full of fraud ;
Bud and be blasted in a breathing-while ;
The bottom poison, and the top o’erstraw’d
With sweets, that shall the truest sight beguile :
The strongest body shall it make most weak,
Strike the wise dumb, and teach the fool to
speak :

• It shall be sparing, and too full of riot,
Teaching decrepit age to tread the measures ;¹
The staring ruffian shall it keep in quiet,
Pluck down the rich, enrich the poor with treasures :
It shall be raging-mad, and silly-mild ;
Make the young old, the old become a child .

• It shall suspect where is no cause of fear ;
It shall not fear where it should most mistrust ;
It shall be merciful, and too severe ;
And most deceiving when it seems most just :
Perverse it shall be where it shows most toward ;
Put fear to valor, courage to the coward :

• It shall be cause of war and dire events,
And set dissension 'twixt the son and sire ;
Subject and servile to all discontents,
As dry combustious matter is to fire :
Sith in his prime death doth my love destroy,
They that love best their loves shall not enjoy.'

By this, the boy, that by her side lay kill'd,
Was melted like a vapor from her sight ;
And in his blood, that on the ground lay spill'd,
A purple flower sprung up, checker'd with white,
Resembling well his pale cheeks, and the blood,
Which in round drops upon their whiteness stood.

A measure was a slow and stately dance.

She bows her head, the new-sprung flower to smell.
Comparing it to her Adonis' breath ;
And says, within her bosom it shall dwell,
Since he himself is reft from her by death :
 She crops the stalk, and in the breach appears
 Green dropping sap, which she compares to
 tears.

‘ Foor flower ! ’ quoth she, ‘ this was thy father’s
 guise,
(Sweet issue of a more sweet-smelling sire)
For every little grief to wet his eyes :
To grow unto himself was his desire,
 And so ’tis thine ; but know, it is as good
 To wither in my breast. as in his blood.

‘ Here was thy father’s bed, here in my breast ;
Thou art the next of blood, and ’tis thy right :
Lo ! in this hollow cradle take thy rest ;
My throbbing heart shall rock thee day and night :
 There shall not be one minute in an hour,
 Wherein I will not kiss my sweet love’s flower.’

Thus, weary of the world, away she hies,
And yokes her silver doves ; by whose swift aid,
Their mistress mounted, through the empty skies
In her light chariot quickly is convey’d,
 Holding their course to Paphos, where their
 queen
Means to immure herself, and not be seen.

THE RAPE OF LUCRECE.

HISTORICAL NOTICE

OF

THE RAPE OF LUCRECE.

Painter has inserted the story of Lucrece in the first volume of his *Palace of Pleasure*, 1567, on which our author is supposed to have formed this poem, which was entered on the books of the Stationers' Company, May 9th, 1594, and was first printed in quarto in the same year. It was again published in 8vo. in 1598, 1600, and 1607. In 1616 another edition appeared, which in the title-page is said to be 'newly revised and corrected;' although it is pronounced by Malone to be the most inaccurate and corrupt of all the ancient copies; and bearing evident marks of the revision of another hand.

THE EPISTLE.

TO THE
 RIGHT HONORABLE HENRY WRIOTHESLEY,
 EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON, AND BARON OF TICHFIELD.

The love I dedicate to your lordship is without end ; whereof this pamphlet, without beginning, is but a superfluous moiety. The warrant I have of your honorable disposition, not the worth of my untutored lines, makes it assured of acceptance. What I have done is yours, what I have to do is yours ; being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duty would show greater : meantime, as it is, it is bound to your lordship, to whom I wish long life, still lengthened with happiness.

Your lordship's in all duty,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE RAPE OF LUCRECE.

ARGUMENT.¹

Lucius Tarquinius, for his excessive pride surnamed **Superbus**, after he had caused his own father-in-law, Servius Tullius, to be cruelly murdered, and, contrary to the Roman laws and customs, not requiring or staying for the people's suffrages, had possessed himself of the kingdom ;—went, accompanied with his sons and other noblemen of Rome, to besiege Ardea ; during which siege, the principal men of the army meeting one evening at the tent of Sextus Tarquinius, the king's son, in their discourses after supper, every one commended the virtues of his own wife ; among whom, Collatinus extolled the incomparable chastity of his wife Lucretia. In that pleasant humor they all posted to Rome ; and intending, by their secret and sudden arrival, to make trial of that which every one had before avouched, only Collatinus finds his wife, though it were late in the night, spinning amongst her maids : the other ladies were all found dancing and revelling, or in several disports : whereupon the noblemen yielded Collatinus the victory, and his wife the fame. At that time Sextus Tarquinius, being inflamed with Lucrece's beauty, yet smothering his passions for the present, departed with the rest back to the camp ; from whence he shortly after privily withdrew himself, and was, according to his estate, royally entertained and lodged by Lucrece at Collatium. The same night, he

¹ This argument appears to have been written by Shakespeare, being prefixed to the original edition of 1594.

Perchance, his boast of Lucrece' sovereignty
Suggested¹ this proud issue of a king :
For by our ears our hearts oft tainted be :
Perchance, that envy of so rich a thing,
Braving compare, disdainfully did sting
His high-pitch'd thoughts, that meaner men
should vaunt
That golden hap which their superiors want.

But some untimely thought did instigate
His all-too-timeless speed, if none of those :
His honor, his affairs, his friends, his state,
Neglected all, with swift intent he goes
To quench the coal which in his liver glows.
O, rash-false heat, wrapp'd in repentant cold,
Thy hasty spring still blasts, and ne'er grows
old !

When at Collatium this false lord arrived,
Well was he welcomed by the Roman dame,
Within whose face beauty and virtue strived
Which of them both should underprop her fame.
When virtue bragg'd, beauty would blush for
shame ;
When beauty boasted blushes, in despite
Virtue would stain that o'er with silver white.

¹ Tempted.

But beauty, in that white intituled,¹
From Venus' doves doth challenge that fair field;
'Then virtue claims from beauty beauty's red,
Which virtue gave the golden age, to gild
Their silver cheeks, and call'd it then their shield;
Teaching them thus to use it in the fight;—
When shame assail'd, the red should fence the
white.

This heraldry in Lucrece' face was seen,
Argued by beauty's red and virtue's white.
Of either's color was the other queen,
Proving from world's minority their right:
Yet their ambition makes them still to fight;
The sovereignty of either being so great,
That oft they interchange each other's seat.

This silent war of lilies and of roses,
Which Tarquin view'd in her fair face's field,
In their pure ranks his traitor eye encloses;
Where, lest between them both it should be kill'd,
The coward captive vanquished doth yield
To those two armies, that would let him go,
Rather than triumph in so false a foe.

Now thinks he that her husband's shallow tongue
(The niggard prodigal that praised her so)

¹ i. e. which consists in that whiteness, or takes its title from it.

In that high task hath done her beauty wrong,
Which far exceeds his barren skill to show :
Therefore that praise¹ which Collatine doth cwe,²
Enchanted Tarquin answers with surmise,
In silent wonder of still-gazing eyes.

'This earthly saint, adored by this devil,
Little suspecteth the false worshipper ;
For unstain'd thoughts do seldom dream on evil ;
Birds never limed no secret bushes fear :
So guiltless she securely gives good cheer
And reverend welcome to her princely guest.
Whose inward ill no outward harm express'd :

For that he color'd with his high estate.
Hiding base sin in plaits of majesty ;
That nothing in him seem'd inordinate,
Save sometime too much wonder of his eye,
Which, having all, all could not satisfy ;
But, poorly rich, so wanteth in his store,
'That, cloy'd with much, he pineth still for more.

But she, that never coped with stranger eyes.
Could pick no meaning from their parling looks,
Nor read the subtle-shining secresies
Writ in the glassy margents of such books :
She touch'd no unknown baits, nor fear'd no hooks ;

¹ Praise here signifies the object of praise, i. e. Lucretia.

² Own, possess.

Nor could she moralise¹ his wanton sight,
More than his eyes were open'd to the light.

He stories to her ears her husband's fame,
Won in the fields of fruitful Italy ;
And decks with praises Collatine's high name,
Made glorious by his manly chivalry,
With bruised arms, and wreaths of victory.
Her joy with heaved-up hand she doth express ;
And, wordless so, greets Heaven for his success.

Far from the purpose of his coming thither,
He makes excuses for his being there :
No cloudy show of stormy, blustering weather
Doth yet in his fair welkin once appear ;
'Till sable Night, mother of Dread and Fear,
Upon the world dim darkness doth display,
And in her vaulty prison stows the day :

For then is Tarquin brought unto his bed,
Intending² weariness with heavy spright ;
For, after supper, long he questioned
With modest Lucrece, and wore out the night.
Now leaden slumber with life's strength doth
fight ;
And every one to rest himself betakes,
Save thieves, and cares, and troubled minds. that
wakes.

¹ Interpret.

² Pretending.

As one of which, doth Tarquin lie revolving
The sundry dangers of his will's obtaining ;
Yet ever to obtain his will resolving,
Though weak-built hopes persuade him to abstaining :
Despair to gain, doth traffic oft for gaining ;
And when great treasure is the meed proposed,
Though death be adjunct, there's no death supposed.

Those that much covet, are with gain so fond,
That what they have not, that which they possess,
They scatter and unloose it from their bond,
And so, by hoping more, they have but less ;
Or, gaining more, the profit of excess
Is but to surfeit, and such griefs sustain,
That they prove bankrupt in this poor-rich gain.

The aim of all is but to nurse the life
With honor, wealth, and ease, in waning age ;
And in this aim there is such thwarting strife,
That one for all, or all for one we gage :
As life for honor, in fell battle's rage ;
Honor for wealth ; and oft that wealth doth cost
The death of all, and all together lost.

So that, in venturing ill, we leave to be
The things we are, for that which we expect ;
And this ambitious, foul infirmity,
In having much, torments us with defect
Of that we have : so then we do neglect

The thing we have, and, all for want of wit,
Make something nothing, by augmenting it.

Such hazard now must doting Tarquin make,
Pawning his honor to obtain his lust;
And for himself, himself he must forsake :
Then where is truth, if there be no self-trust ?
When shall he think to find a stranger just,
When he himself himself confounds, betrays
To slanderous tongues, and wretched, hateful
days ?

Now stole upon the time the dead of night,
When heavy sleep had closed up mortal eyes :
No comfortable star did lend his light ;
No noise but owls' and wolves' death-boding cries :
Now serves the season that they may surprise
The silly lambs ; pure thoughts are dead and
still,
While Lust and Murder wake to stain and kill.

And now this lustful lord leap'd from his bed,
Throwing his mantle rudely o'er his arm ;
Is madly toss'd between desire and dread ;
The one sweetly flatters, the other feareth harm :
But honest Fear, bewitch'd with lust's foul charm,
Doth too too oft betake him to retire,
Beaten away by brainsick, rude Desire.

His falchion on a flint he softly smiteth,
That from the cold stone sparks of fire do fly ;

Whereat a waxen torch forthwith he lighteth,
Which must be loadstar to his lustful eye;
And to the flame thus speaks advisedly:—
‘As from this cold flint I enforced this fire,
So Lucrece must I force to my desire.’

Here pale with fear he doth premeditate
The dangers of his loathsome enterprise,
And in his inward mind he doth debate
What following sorrow may on this arise:
Then looking scornfully, he doth despise
His naked armour of still-slaughter’d lust,
And justly thus controls his thoughts unjust:—

‘Fair torch, burn out thy light, and lend it not
To darken her whose light excelleth thine!
And die, unhallow’d thoughts, before you blot
With your uncleanness that which is divine!
Offer pure incense to so pure a shrine:
Let fair humanity abhor the deed
That spots and stains love’s modest, snow-white
weed.

‘O, shame to knighthood and to shining arms!
O, foul dishonor to my household’s grave!
O, impious act, including all foul harms!
A martial man to be soft fancy’s¹ slave!
True valor still a true respect should have:

¹ Love’s.

Then my digression is so vile, so base,
That it will live engraven in my face.

• Yea, though I die, the scandal will survive,
And be an eyesore in my golden coat;
Some loathsome dash the herald will contrive.
To cipher me, how fondly I did dote;
That my posterity, shamed with the note,
Shall curse my bones, and hold it for no sin
To wish that I their father had not been.

• What win I, if I gain the thing I seek?
A dream, a breath, a froth of fleeting joy.
Who buys a minute's mirth, to wail a week?
Or sells eternity, to get a toy?
For one sweet grape who will the vine destroy?
Or what fond beggar, but to touch the crown,
Would with the sceptre straight be stricken
down?

• If Collatinus dream of my intent,
Will he not wake, and in a desperate rage
Post hither, this vile purpose to prevent?
This siege that hath engirt his marriage,
This blur to youth, this sorrow to the sage,
This dying virtue, this surviving shame,
Whose crime will bear an ever-during blame?

• O, what excuse can my invention make.
When thou shalt charge me with so black a
deed?

Will not my tongue be mute, my frail joints shake ?
Mine eyes forego their light, my false heart bleed ?
The guilt being great, the fear doth still exceed ;
And extreme fear can neither fight nor fly,
But, coward-like, with trembling terror die.

• Had Collatinus kill'd my son or sire,
Or lain in ambush to betray my life,
Or were he not my dear friend, this desire
Might have excuse to work upon his wife ;
As in revenge or quittal of such strife :
But as he is my kinsman, my dear friend,
The shame and fault finds no excuse nor end.

• Shameful it is ?—ay, if the fact be known :
Hateful it is ?—there is no hate in loving :
I'll beg her love :—but she is not her own ?
The worst is but denial, and reproving :
My will is strong, past reason's weak removing.
Who fears a sentence or an old man's saw,
Shall by a painted cloth¹ be kept in awe.'

Thus, graceless, holds he disputation
'Tween frozen conscience and hot-burning will,
And with good thoughts makes dispensation,
Urging the worser sense for vantage still ;
Which in a moment doth confound and kill

¹ In the old tapestries, or painted cloths, moral sentences were usually wrought.

All pure effects, and doth so far proceed,
That what is vile shows like a virtuous deed.

Quoth he, ' She took me kindly by the hand,
And gazed for tidings in my eager eyes,
Fearing some hard news from the warlike band,
Where her beloved Collatinus lies.
O, how her fear did make her color rise !
First red as roses, that on lawn we lay :
Then white as lawn, the roses took away.

' And how her hand, in my hand being lock'd,
Forced it to tremble with her loyal fear !
Which struck her sad, and then it faster rock'd,
Until her husband's welfare she did hear ;
Whereat she smiled with so sweet a cheer.
That had Narciseus seen her as she stood,
Self-love had never drown'd him in the flood.

' Why hunt I then for color or excuses ?
All orators are dumb when beauty pleadeth ;
Poor wretches have remorse in poor abuses ;
Love thrives not in the heart that shadows dreadeth :
Affection is my captain, and he leadeth ;
And when his gaudy banner is display'd,
The coward fights, and will not be dismay'd.

' Then, childish fear, avaunt ! debating, die !
Respect¹ and reason, wait on wrinkled age !

¹ Respect here means cautious prudence.

My heart shall never countermand mine eye :
Sad pause and deep regard beseem the sage ;
My part is youth, and beats these from the
stage :

Desire my pilot is, beauty my prize ;
Then who fears sinking where such treasure
lies?'

As corn o'ergrown by weeds, so heedful fear
Is almost choked by unresisted lust.
Away he steals with open, listening ear,
Full of foul hope, and full of fond mistrust ;
Both which, as servitors to the unjust,
So cross him with their opposite persuasion,
That now he vows a league, and now invasion.

Within his thought her heavenly image sits,
And in the selfsame seat sits Collatine :
That eye which looks on her, confounds his wits ;
That eye which him beholds, as more divine,
Unto a view so false will not incline ;
But with a pure appeal seeks to the heart.
Which once corrupted, takes the worser part ;

And therein heartens up his servile powers ;
Who, flatter'd by their leader's jocund show,
Stuff up his lust, as minutes fill up hours ;
And as their captain, so their pride doth grow,
Paying more slavish tribute than they owe.
By reprobate desire thus madly led.
The Roman lord marcheth to Lucrece' bed.

The locks between her chamber and his will,
Each one by him enforced, retires his ward;
But as they open, they all rate his ill,
Which drives the creeping thief to some regard:
The threshold grates the door to have him heard;
Night-wandering weasels shriek to see him
there;
They fright him, yet he still pursues his fear.

As each unwilling portal yields him way,
Through little vents and crannies of the place
The wind wars with his torch, to make him stay,
And blows the smoke of it into his face,
Extinguishing his conduct¹ in this case:
But his hot heart, which fond desire doth
scorch,
Puffs forth another wind that fires the torch:

And, being lighted, by the light he spies
Lucretia's glove, wherein her needle sticks:
He takes it from the rushes² where it lies;
And, griping it, the needl³ his finger pricks:
As who should say, This glove to wanton tricks
Is not inured; return again in haste:
Thou seest our mistress' ornaments are chaste.

¹ Conduct for conductor.

² Apartments in England were strewed with rushes in the time of our author.

³ Needl for needle.

But all these poor forbiddings could not stay him :
 He in the worst sense construes their denial :
 The doors, the wind, the glove, that did delay him,
 He takes for accidental things of trial ;
 Or as those bars which stop the hourly dial,
 Who with a lingering stay his course doth let,¹
 Till every minute pays the hour his debt.

‘ So, so,’ quoth he, ‘ these lets attend the time,
 Like little frosts that sometime threat the spring,
 To add a more rejoicing to the prime,
 And give the sneaped² birds more cause to sing.
 Pain pays the income of each precious thing :
 Huge rocks, high winds, strong pirates, shelves
 and sands,
 The merchant fears, ere rich at home he lands.’

When he come unto the chamber door,
 shuts him from the heaven of his thought ;
 with a yielding latch, and with no more,
 barr’d him from the blessed thing he sought,
 on himself impiety hath wrought,
 at for his prey to pray he doth begin,
 if the Heavens should countenance his sin.

in the midst of his unfruitful prayer,
 he solicited the eternal Power,

¹ Hinder.

² Checked.

THE RAPE OF LUCRECE.

That his foul thoughts might compass his fair fair
And they would stand auspicious to the hour ;—
Even there he starts :—quoth he, ‘ I must deflour
The powers, to whom I pray, abhor this fact ;
How can they then assist me in the act ?

‘ Then Love and Fortune be my gods, my guide !
My will is back’d with resolution :
Thoughts are but dreams till their effects be tried
The blackest sin is clear’d with absolution :
Against love’s fire fear’s frost hath dissolution.
The eye of heaven is out, and misty night
Covers the shame that follows sweet delight.’

This said, his guilty hand pluck’d up the latch,
And with his knee the door he opens wide :
The dove sleeps fast that this night-owl will catch
Thus treason works ere traitors be espied.
Who sees the lurking serpent, steps aside ;
But she, sound sleeping, fearing no such thing,
Lies at the mercy of his mortal sting.

Into the chamber wickedly he stalks,
And gazeth on her yet unstained bed :
The curtains being close, about he walks,
Rolling his greedy eyeballs in his head :
By their high treason is his heart misled ;
Which gives the watchword to his hand :
soon,
To draw the cloud that hides the silver moon.

Look, as the fair and fiery-pointed sun,
Rushing from forth a cloud, bereaves our sight;
Even so, the curtain drawn, his eyes begun
To wink, being blinded with a greater light:
Whether it is, that she reflects so bright,
That dazzleth them, or else some shame sup-
posed;
But blind they are, and keep themselves en-
closed.

O, had they in that darksome prison died,
Then had they seen the period of their ill!
Then Collatine again, by Lucrece' side,
In his clear bed might have reposed still:
But they must ope, this blessed league to kill;
And holy-thoughted Lucrece to their sight
Must sell her joy, her life, her world's delight.

Her lily hand her rosy cheek lies under,
Cozening the pillow of a lawful kiss;
Who, therefore angry, seems to part in sunder,
Swelling on either side, to want his bliss;
Between whose hills her head entombed is:
Where, like a virtuous monument, she lies,
To be admired of lewd, unhallow'd eyes.

Without the bed her other fair hand was,
On the green coverlet; whose perfect white
Show'd like an April daisy on the grass,
With pearly sweat, resembling dew of night.
Her eyes, like marigolds, had sheathed their light:

And, canopied in darkness. sweetly lay,
Till they might open to adorn the day.

Her hair, like golden threads, play'd with her
breath ;

O, modest wantons ! wanton modesty !
Showing life's triumph in the map of death,
And death's dim look in life's mortality :
Each in her sleep themselves so beautify,
As if between them twain there were no strife,
But that life lived in death, and death in life.

Her breasts, like ivory globes circled with blue,
A pair of maiden worlds unconquered ;
Save of their lord, no bearing yoke they knew,
And him by oath they truly honored.
These worlds in Tarquin new ambition bred ;
Who, like a foul usurper, went about
From this fair throne to heave the owner out.

What could he see, but mightily he noted ?
What did he note, but strongly he desired ?
What he beheld, on that he firmly doted ;
And in his will his wilful eye he tired.
With more than admiration he admired
Her azure veins, her alabaster skin,
Her coral lips, her snow-white, dimpled chin.

As the grim lion fawneth o'er his prey,
Sharp hunger by the conquest satisfied,

Imagine her, as one in dead of night
From forth dull sleep by dreadful fancy waking,
That thinks she hath beheld some ghastly sprite,
Whose grim aspect sets every joint a shaking;
What terror 'tis! but she, in worser taking,
From sleep disturbed, heedfully doth view
The sight which makes supposed terror true.

Wrapp'd and confounded in a thousand fears,
Like to a new-kill'd bird she trembling lies:
She dares not look; yet, winking, there appears
Quick-shifting antics, ugly in her eyes:
Such shadows are the weak brain's forgeries;
Who, angry that the eyes fly from their lights,
In darkness daunts them with more dreadful
sights.

His hand, that yet remains upon her breast,
(Rude ram, to batter such an ivory wall!)
May feel her heart, (poor citizen!) distress'd,
Wounding itself to death, rise up and fall,
Beating her bulk,¹ that his hand shakes withal.
This moves in him more rage, and lesser pity,
To make the breach, and enter this sweet city.

First, like a trumpet, doth his tongue begin
To sound a parley to his heartless foe,

¹ Body.

Who o'er the white sheet peers her whiter chin,
The reason of this rash alarm to know,
Which he by dumb demeanor seeks to show ;
But she with vehement prayers urgeth still,
Under what color he commits this ill.

Thus he replies :— ' The color in thy face
(That even for anger makes the lily pale,
And the red rose blush at her own disgrace)
Shall plead for me, and tell my loving tale :
Under that color am I come to scale
Thy never-conquer'd fort ; the fault is thine,
For those thine eyes betray thee unto mine.

' Thus I forestall thee, if thou mean to chide :
Thy beauty hath ensnared thee to this night,
Where thou with patience must my will abide,—
My will, that marks thee for my earth's delight,
Which I to conquer sought with all my might ;
But as reproof and reason beat it dead,
By thy bright beauty was it newly bred.

' I see what crosses my attempt will bring ;
I know what thorns the growing rose defends ;
I think the honey guarded with a sting :
All this, beforehand, counsel comprehends :
But will is deaf, and hears no heedful friends ;
Only he hath an eye to gaze on beauty,
And dotes on what he looks, 'gainst law or
duty

‘ I have debated, even in my soul,
What wrong, what shame, what sorrow I shall
 breed ;
But nothing can affection’s course control,
Or stop the headlong fury of his speed.
I know repentant tears ensue the deed,
 Reproach, disdain, and deadly enmity ;
 Yet strive I to embrace mine infamy.’

‘ This said, he shakes aloft his Roman blade,
Which, like a falcon towering in the skies,
Coucheth the fowl below with his wings’ shade,
Whose crooked beak threats, if he mount he
 dies :

So under his insulting falchion lies
 Harmless Lucretia, marking what he tells
 With trembling fear, as fowl hear falcons’ bells.

‘ Lucrece,’ quoth he, ‘ this night I must enjoy thee :
If thou deny, then force must work my way,
For in thy bed I purpose to destroy thee ;
That done, some worthless slave of thine I ’ll slay,
To kill thine honor with thy life’s decay ;
 And in thy dead arms do I mean to place him,
 Swearing I slew him, seeing thee embrace him :

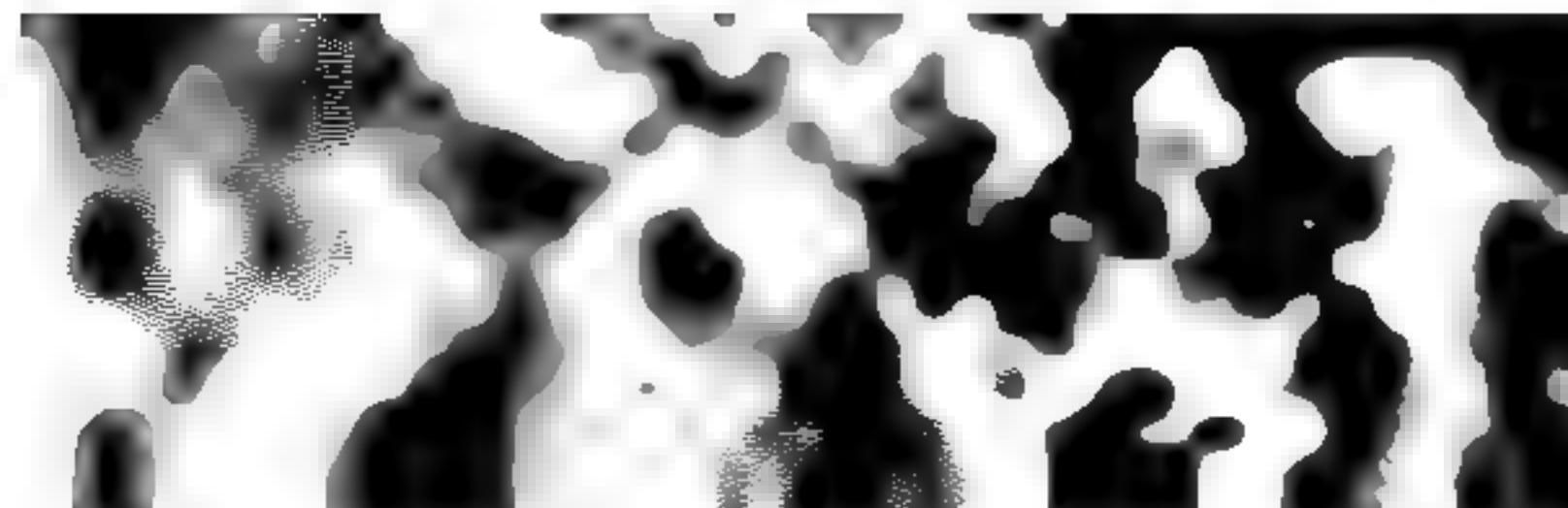
‘ So thy surviving husband shall remain
The scornful mark of every open eye ;
Thy kinsmen hang their heads at this disdain ;
Thy issue blurr’d with nameless bastardy :
And thou, the author of their obloquy,

Shalt have thy trespass cited up in rhymes,
And sung by children in succeeding times.

‘ But if thou yield, I rest thy secret friend :
The fault unknown is as a thought unacted ;
A little harm, done to a great, good end,
For lawful policy remains enacted.
The poisonous simple sometimes is compacted
In a pure compound ; being so applied,
His venom in effect is purified.

‘ Then for thy husband and thy children’s sake,
Tender ¹ my suit : bequeathe not to their lot
The shame that from them no device can take,
The blemish that will never be forgot ;
Worse than a slavish wipe, or birth-hour’s blot :
For marks descried in men’s nativity
Are nature’s faults, not their own infamy.’

Here with a cockatrice’ dead-killing eye
He rouseth up himself, and makes a pause ;
While she, the picture of pure piety,
Like a white hind under the grype’s ² sharp
claws,
Pleads in a wilderness, where are no laws,
To the rough beast that knows no gentle sight,
Nor aught obeys but his foul appetite.



Look, when a black-faced cloud the world doth
threat,

In his dim mist the aspiring mountains hiding,
From earth's dark womb some gentle gust doth get,
Which blows these pitchy vapors from their bidding,
Hindering their present fall by this dividing ;
So his unhallow'd haste her words delays,
And moody Pluto winks while Orpheus plays.

Yet, foul, night-waking cat, he doth but dally,
While in his holdfast foot the weak mouse panteth ;
Her sad behavior feeds his vulture folly ;
A swallowing gulf, that even in plenty wanteth :
His ear her prayers admits, but his heart granteth
No penetrable entrance to her plaining :
Tears harden lust, though marble wear with
raining.

Her pity-pleading eyes are sadly fix'd
In the remorseless wrinkles of his face ;
Her modest eloquence with sighs is mix'd,
Which to her oratory adds more grace.
She puts the period often from his place,
And 'midst the sentence so her accent breaks,
That twice she doth begin ere once she speaks.

She conjures him by high almighty Jove,
By knighthood, gentry, and sweet friendship's oath,
By her untimely tears, her husband's love,
By holy human law, and common troth,
By heaven and earth, and all the power of both,

That to his borrow'd bed he make retire,
And stoop to honor, not to foul desire.

Quoth she,—‘ Reward not hospitality
With such black payment as thou hast pretended ;¹
Mud not the fountain that gave drink to thee :
Mar not the thing that cannot be amended :
End thy ill aim, before thy shoot be ended.

He is no woodman, that doth bend his bow
To strike a poor, unseasonable doe.

‘ My husband is thy friend, for his sake spare
me ;

Thyself art mighty, for thine own sake leave me ;
Myself a weakling, do not then ensnare me :
‘Thou look'st not like deceit ; do not deceive me :
My sighs, like whirlwinds, labor hence to heave
thee.

If ever man were moved with woman's moans,
Be moved with my tears, my sighs, my groans :

‘ All which together, like a troubled ocean,
Beat at thy rocky and wreck-threatening heart,
To soften it with their continual motion ;
For stones dissolved to water do convert.
O, if no harder than a stone thou art,
Melt at my tears, and be compassionate !
Soft pity enters at an iron gate.

¹ Intended, proposed to thyself

‘ In Tarquin’s likeness I did entertain thee :
Hast thou put on his shape to do him shame ?
To all the host of heaven I complain me,
Thou wrong’st his honor, wound’st his princely
name.

Thou art not what thou seem’st; and if the
same,

Thou seem’st not what thou art, a god, a king;
For kings, like gods, should govern every thing.

‘ How will thy shame be seeded in thine age,
When thus thy vices bud before thy spring ?
If in thy hope thou darest do such outrage,
What darest thou not when once thou art a
king ?

O, be remember’d,¹ no outrageous thing
From vassal actors can be wiped away;
Then kings’ misdeeds cannot be hid in clay.

‘ This deed will make thee only loved for fear,
But happy monarchs still are fear’d for love :
With foul offenders thou perforce must bear,
When they in thee the like offences prove :
If but for fear of this, thy will remove ;
For princes are the glass, the school, the book,
Where subjects’ eyes do learn, do read, do
look.

¹ Bear it in your mind.

‘ And wilt thou be the school where Lust shall
learn ?

Must he in thee read lectures of such shame ?

Wilt thou be glass, wherein it shall discern

Authority for sin, warrant for blame,

To privilege dishonor in thy name ?

Thou back’st reproach against long-lived laud,

And makest fair reputation but a bawd.

‘ Hast thou command ? by him that gave it thee,

From a pure heart command thy rebel will :

Draw not thy sword to guard iniquity,

For it was lent thee all that brood to kill.

Thy princely office how canst thou fulfil,

When, pattern’d by thy fault, foul Sin may
say,

He learn’d to sin, and thou didst teach the
way ?

‘ Think but how vile a spectacle it were

To view thy present trespass in another.

Men’s faults do seldom to themselves appear :

Their own transgressions partially they smother :

This guilt would seem death-worthy in thy brother.

O, how are they wrapp’d in with infamies,

That from their own misdeeds askaunce their
eyes !

‘ To thee, to thee, my heaved-up hands appeal,

Not to seducing iust, thy rash relier ;

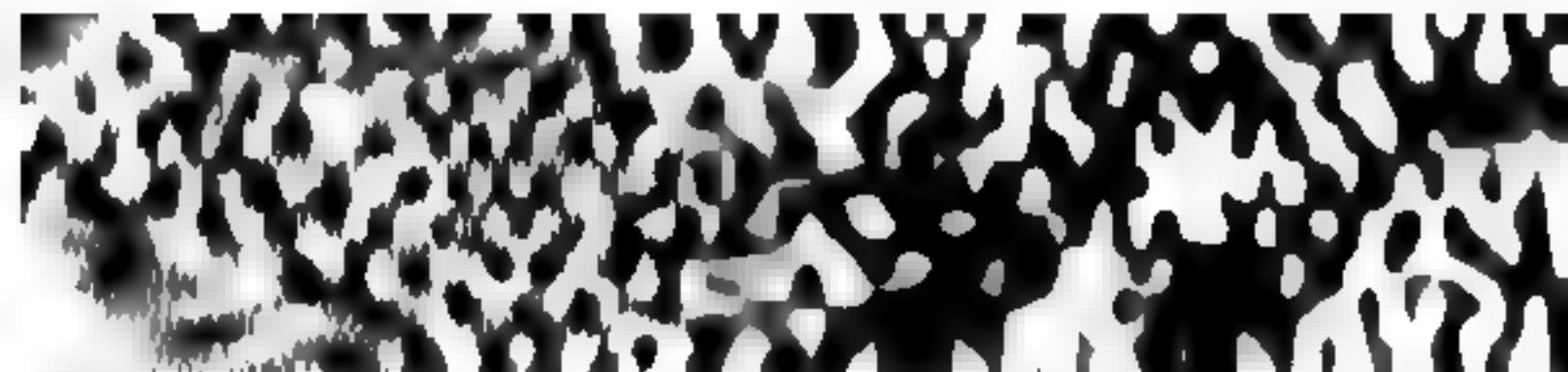
I sue for exiled majesty's repeal;
Let him return, and flattering thoughts retire :
His true respect will prison false desire,
And wipe the dim mist from thy doting eyne,
That thou shalt see thy state, and pity mine.'

' Have done,' quoth he : ' my uncontrolled tide
Turns not, but swells the higher by this let : '
Small lights are soon blown out ; huge fires abide,
And with the wind in greater fury fret :
The petty streams, that pay a daily debt
To their salt sovereign, with their fresh fulbs'
haste,
Add to his flow, but alter not his taste.'

' Thou art,' quoth she, ' a sea, a sovereign king ;
And, lo, there falls into thy boundless flood
Black lust, dishonor, shame, misgoverning,
Who seek to stain the ocean of thy blood.
If all these petty ills shall change thy good,
Thy sea within a puddle's womb is hearsed,
And not the puddle in thy sea dispersed.

' So shall these slaves be king, and thou their
slave ;
Thou nobly base, they basely dignified ;
Thou their fair life, and they thy fouler grave ;
Thou loathed in their shame, they in thy pride.
The lesser thing should not the greater hide :

1 Obstruction.



The cedar stoops not to the base shrub's foot.
But low shrubs wither at the cedar's root.

' So let thy thoughts, low vassals to thy state,'——
' No more,' quoth he : ' by heaven, I will not hear
thee :

Yield to my love ; if not, enforced hate,
Instead of love's coy touch, shall rudely tear thee :
That done, despitefully I mean to bear thee
Unto the base bed of some rascal groom,
To be thy partner in this shameful doom.'

This said, he sets his foot upon the light,
For light and lust are deadly enemies :
Shame, folded up in blind, concealing night,
When most unseen, then most doth tyrannisc.
The wolf hath seised his prey, the poor lamb
cries,
'Till with her own white fleece her voice controll'd
Entombs her outcry in her lips' sweet fold :

For with the nightly linen that she wears,
He pens her piteous clamors in her head ;
Cooling his hot face in the chastest tears
That ever modest eyes with sorrow shed.
O, that prone lust should stain so pure a bed !
The spots whereof could weeping purify,
Her tears should drop on them perpetually.

But she hath lost a dearer thing than life,
And he hath won what he would lose again.

This forced league doth force a farther strife ;
This momentary joy breeds months of pain ;
This hot desire converts to cold disdain :
 Pure chastity is rifled of her store ;
 And lust, the thief, far poorer than before.

Look, as the full-fed hound or gorged hawk,
Unapt for tender smell or speedy flight,
Make slow pursuit, or altogether balk¹
The prey, wherein by nature they delight ;
So surfeit-taking Tarquin fares this night :
 His taste delicious, in digestion souring,
 Devours his will, that lived by foul devouring.

O, deeper sin than bottomless conceit
Can comprehend in still imagination !
Drunken Desire must vomit his receipt,
Ere he can see his own abomination.
While lust is in his pride, no exclamation
 Can curb his heat, or rein his rash desire,
 Till, like a jade, self-will himself doth tire :

And then, with lank and lean, discolor'd cheek,
With heavy eye, knit brow, and strengthless pace,
Feeble Desire, all recreant, poor, and meek,
Like to a bankrupt beggar wails his case :
The flesh being proud, Desire doth fight with
 grace,

¹ Omit, leave.

For there it revels ; and when that decays,
The guilty rebel for remission prays.

So fares it with this faultful lord of Rome,
Who this accomplishment so hotly chased ;
For now against himself he sounds this doom :—
That through the length of times he stands disgraced :

Besides, his soul's fair temple is defaced ;
To whose weak ruins muster troops of cares,
To ask the spotted princess how she fares.

She says, her subjects with foul insurrection
Have batter'd down her consecrated wall,
And by their mortal fault brought in subjection
Her immortality, and made her thrall
To living death, and pain perpetual ;
Which in her prescience she controlled still,
But her foresight could not forestall their will.

Even in this thought, through the dark night he
stealeth,

A captive victor, that hath lost in gain ;
Bearing away the wound that nothing healeth ;
The scar that will, despite of cure, remain,
Leaving his spoil perplex'd in greater pain.
She bears the load of lust he left behind,
And he the burthen of a guilty mind.

He, like a thievish dog, creeps sadly thence ;
She, like a wearied lamb, lies panting there.

He scowls, and hates himself for his offence :
She desperate, with her nails her flesh doth tear ;
He faintly flies, sweating with guilty fear ;
 She stays, exclaiming on the direful night ;
 He runs, and chides his vanish'd, loathed de
 light.

He thence departs a heavy convertite ;¹
She there remains a hopeless castaway :
He in his speed looks for the morning light ;
She prays she never may behold the day :
‘ For day,’ quoth she, ‘ night’s scapes doth ope
 lay ;
 And my true eyes have never practised how
 To cloak offences with a cunning brow.

‘ They think not but that every eye can see
The same disgrace which they themselves behold ,
And therefore would they still in darkness be,
To have their unseen sin remain untold :
For they their guilt with weeping will unfold ;
 And grave, like water, that doth eat in steel,
 Upon my cheeks what helpless shame I feel.’

Here she exclaims against repose and rest,
And bids her eyes hereafter still be blind.
She wakes her heart by beating on her breast,

¹ Convertite for convert.

And bids it leap from thence, where it may find
Some purer chest, to close so pure a mind.

Frantic with grief, thus breathes she forth her
spite

Against the unseen secrecy of night :—

‘ O comfort-killing night, image of hell !
Dim register and notary of shame !
Black stage for tragedies and murders fell !
Vast sin-concealing chaos ! nurse of blame !
Blind, muffled bawd ! dark harbor for defame !
Grim cave of death ! whispering conspirator.
With close-tongued treason and the ravisher !

‘ O hateful, vaporous, and foggy night,
Since thou art guilty of my cureless crime,
Muster thy mists to meet the eastern light,
Make war against proportion’d course of time !
Or, if thou wilt permit the sun to climb
His wonted height, yet ere he go to bed,
Knit poisonous clouds about his golden head.

‘ With rotten damps ravish the morning air ;
Let their exhaled, unwholesome breaths make
sick
The life of purity, the supreme fair,
Ere he arrive his weary noontide prick ;
And let thy misty vapors march so thick,
That in their smoky ranks his smother’d light
May set at noon, and make perpetual night.

• Were Tarquin night, (as he is but night's child)
The silver-shining queen he would distain ;
Her twinkling handmaids too, by him defiled,
Through night's black bosom should not peep
again ;

So should I have copartners in my pain :
And fellowship in woe doth woe assuage,
As palmers' chat makes short their pilgrimage.

• Where¹ now I have no one to blush with me,
To cross their arms, and hang their heads with
mine,
To mask their brows, and hide their infamy ;
But I alone, alone must sit and pine,
Seasoning the earth with showers of silver brine ;
Mingling my talk with tears, my grief with
groans,
Poor wasting monuments of lasting moans.

• O night, thou furnace of foul-reeking smoke,
Let not the jealous day behold that face
Which, underneath thy black, all-hiding cloak,
Immodestly lies martyr'd with disgrace !
Keep still possession of thy gloomy place ;
That all the faults, which in thy reign are
made,
May likewise be sepulchred in thy shade !

¹ Whereas.

‘ Make me not object to the tell-tale day !
The light will show, character’d in my brow,
‘The story of sweet chastity’s decay,
‘The impious breach of holy wedlock vow :
Yea, the illiterate, that know not how
 ‘To ‘cipher what is writ in learned books.
Will quote ¹ my loathsome trespass in my looks.

‘ The nurse, to still her child, will tell my story.
And fright her crying babe with Tarquin’s name ;
‘The orator, to deck his oratory,
Will couple my reproach to Tarquin’s shame :
Feast-finding minstrels, tuning my defame,
 Will tie the hearers to attend each line,
How ‘Tarquin wronged me, I Collatine.

‘ Let my good name, that senseless reputation,
For Collatine’s dear love be kept unspotted :
If that be made a theme for disputation,
The branches of another root are rotted.
And undeserved reproach to him allotted.
 ‘That is as clear from this attaint of mine,
As I, ere this, was pure to Collatine.

‘ O unseen shame ! invisible disgrace !
O unfelt sore ! crest-wounding. private scar !
Reproach is stamp’d in Collatinus’ face.

¹ Observe.

And Tarquin's eye may read the mot¹ afar,
How he in peace is wounded, not in war.

Alas, how many bear such shameful blows,
Which not themselves, but he that gives them,
knows!

• If, Collatine, thine honor lay in me,
From me by strong assault it is bereft:
My honey lost, and I, a drone-like bee,
Have no perfection of my summer left,
But robb'd and ransack'd by injurious theft:
In thy weak hive a wandering wasp hath crept,
And suck'd the honey which thy chaste tee
kept.

• Yet am I guiltless of thy honor's wreck;
Yet for thy honor did I entertain him:
Coming from thee, I could not put him back,
For it had been dishonor to disdain him:
Besides, of weariness he did complain him,
And talk'd of virtue:—O, unlook'd-for evil,
When virtue is profaned in such a devil!

• Why should the worm intrude the maiden bud;
Or hateful cuckoos hatch in sparrows' nests;
Or toads infect fair founts with venom mud;
Or tyrant folly lurk in gentle breasts;
Or kings be breakers of their own behests?²

¹ i. e. motto.

² Commands.

But no perfection is so absolute,
That some impurity doth not pollute.

• The aged man, that coffers up his gold,
Is plagued with cramps, and gouta, and painful
fits,
And scarce hath eyes his treasure to behold :
But like still-pining Tantalus he sits,
And useless burns the harvest of his wits ;
Having no other pleasure of his gain,
But torment that it cannot cure his pain.

• So then he hath it, when he cannot use it,
And leaves it to be master'd by his young ;
Who in their pride do presently abuse it :
Their father was too weak, and they too strong,
To hold their cursed-blessed fortune long.
The sweets we wish for turn to loathed soars,
Even in the moment that we call them ours.

• Unruly blasts wait on the tender spring ;
Unwholesome weeds take root with precious flowers ;
The adder hisses where the sweet birds sing ;
What virtue breeds iniquity devours :
We have no good that we can say is ours,
But ill-annexed Opportunity
Or kills his life, or else his quality.

• • • • • ! thy guilt is great :
Excusest the traitor's treason ;
Wolf where he the lamb may get ;

Whoever plots the sin, thou 'point'st the season :
Tis thou that spurn'st at right, at law, at reason ;
And in thy shady cell, where none may spy
him,
Sits Sin, to seise the souls that wander by him.

' Thou makest the vestal violate her oath ;
Thou blow'st the fire when temperance is thaw'd :
Thou smother'st honesty, thou murder'st troth ;
Thou foul abettor ! thou notorious bawd !
Thou plantest scandal, and displacest laud.
Thou ravisher, thou traitor, thou false thief,
Thy honey turns to gall, thy joy to grief !

' Thy secret pleasure turns to open shame ;
Thy private feasting to a public fast ;
Thy smoothing¹ titles to a ragged name :
Thy sugar'd tongue to bitter wormwood taste :
Thy violent vanities can never last.
How comes it then, vile Opportunity,
Being so bad, such numbers seek for thee ?

' When wilt thou be the humble suppliant's friend,
And bring him where his suit may be obtain'd ?
When wilt thou sort² an hour great strifes to
end,
Or free that soul which wretchedness hath chain'd ?
Give physic to the sick, ease to the pain'd ?

¹ Flattering.

² Choose.

The poor, lame, blind, halt, creep, cry out for
thee ;

But they ne'er meet with Opportunity.

• The patient dies while the physician sleeps ;

The orphan pines while the oppressor feeds ;

Justice is feasting while the widow weeps ;

Advice is sporting while infection breeds ;

Thou grant'st no time for charitable deeds.

Wrath, envy, treason, rape, and murder's rages,

The heinous hours wait on them as their pages.

• When Truth and Virtue have to do with thee,

A thousand crosses keep them from thy aid :

They buy thy help : but Sin ne'er gives a fee.

He gratis comes ; and thou art well appay'd,¹

As well to hear as grant what he hath said :

My Collatine would else have come to me

When Tarquin did, but he was stay'd by thee.

• Guilty thou art of murder and of theft ;

Guilty of perjury and subornation ;

Guilty of treason, forgery, and shift ;

Guilty of incest, that abomination :

An accessory, by thine inclination,

To all sins past, and all that are to come.

From the creation to the general doom.

¹ Pleased, satisfied.

• Misshapen Time, copesmate¹ of ugly night,
Swift subtle post, carrier of grisly care ;
Eater of youth, false slave to false delight,
Base watch of woes, sin's packhorse, virtue's snare ,
Thou nursest all, and murderest all that are.

O, hear me then, injurious, shifting Time !
Be guilty of my death, since of my crime.

• Why hath thy servant, Opportunity,
Betray'd the hours thou gavest me to repose ?
Cancell'd my fortunes, and enchained me
To endless date of never-ending woes ?
Time's office is to fine² the hate of foes ;
To eat up errors by opinion bred,
Not spend the dowry of a lawful bed.

• Time's glory is to calm contending kings ;
To unmask falsehood, and bring truth to light ;
To stamp the seal of time in aged things ;
To wake the morn, and sentinel the night ;
To wrong the wronger till he render right ;
To ruinate proud buildings with thy hours ;
And smear with dust their glittering, golden
towers ;

• To fill with worm-holes stately monuments ;
To feed oblivion with decay of things ;
To blot old books, and alter their contents ;

¹ Companion.

² Bring to an end.

To pluck the quills from ancient ravens' wings;
To dry the old oak's sap, and cherish springs;
To spoil antiquities of hammer'd steel;
And turn the giddy round of Fortune's wheel;

• To show the beldam daughters of her daughter;
To make the child a man, the man a child;
To slay the tiger that doth live by slaughter;
To tame the unicorn and lion wild;
To mock the subtle, in themselves beguiled;
To cheer the ploughman with increaseful crops,
And waste huge stones with little water-drops.

• Why work'st thou mischief in thy pilgrimage,
Unless thou couldst return to make amends?
One poor retiring¹ minute in an age
Would purchase thee a thousand thousand friends,
Lending him wit, that to bad debtors lends.

O, this dread night, wouldst thou one hour come
back,

I could prevent this storm, and shun thy wrack!

• Thou ceaseless lackey to eternity,
With some mischance cross Tarquin in his flight;
Devise extremes beyond extremity,
To make him curse this cursed, crimeful night:
Let ghastly shadows his lewd eyes affright;

¹ Returning.

And the dire thought of his committed evil,
Shape every bush a hideous, shapeless devil.

‘ Disturb his hours of rest with restless trances ;
Afflict him in his bed with bedrid groans ;
Let there bechance him pitiful mischances,
To make him moan, but pity not his moans :
Stone him with harden’d hearts, harder than stones :
And let mild women to him lose their mildness,
Wilder to him than tigers in their wildness.

‘ Let him have time to tear his curled hair ;
Let him have time against himself to rave ;
Let him have time of Time’s help to despair ;
Let him have time to live a loathed slave ;
Let him have time a beggar’s orts to crave ;
And time to see one that by alms doth live,
Disdain to him disdained scraps to give.

‘ Let him have time to see his friends his foes,
And merry fools to mock at him resort ;
Let him have time to mark how slow time goes
In time of sorrow, and how swift and short
His time of folly and his time of sport :
And ever let his unrecalling ¹ crime
Have time to wail the abusing of his time.

‘ O Time, thou tutor both to good and bad,
Teach me to curse him that thou taught’st this ill !

¹ For unrecallable.

At his own shadow let the thief run mad.
Himself himself seek every hour to kill !
Such wretched hands such wretched blood should
spill :

For who so base would such an office have
As slanderous death's-man to so base a slave ?

• The baser is he, coming from a king,
To shame his hope with deeds degenerate.
The mightier man, the mightier is the thing
That makes him honor'd, or begets him hate ;
For greatest scandal waits on greatest state.
The moon being clouded, presently is miss'd ;
But little stars may hide them when they list.

• The crow may bathe his coal-black wings in
mire,
And unperceived fly with the filth away ;
But if the like the snow-white swan desire,
The stain upon his silver down will stay.
Poor grooms are sightless night, kings glorious
day.

Gnats are unnoted wheresoe'er they fly,
But eagles gazed upon with every eye.

• Out, idle words, servants to shallow fools !
Unprofitable sounds, weak arbitrators !
Busy yourselves in skill-contending schools :
Debate where leisure serves with dull debaters ;
To trembling clients be you mediators :

For me, I force¹ not argument a straw.
Since that my case is past the help of law.

‘ In vain I rail at Opportunity,
At Time, at Tarquin, and uncheerful night ;
In vain I cavil with my infamy ;
In vain I spurn at my confirm’d despite :
This helpless smoke of words doth me no right.
The remedy indeed to do me good,
Is to let forth my foul, defiled blood.

‘ Poor hand, why quiver’st thou at this decree ?
Honor thyself to rid me of this shame :
For if I die, my honor lives in thee ;
But if I live, thou livest in my defame :
Since thou couldst not defend thy loyal dame,
And wast afraid to scratch her wicked foe,
Kill both thyself and her for yielding so.’

This said, from her betumbled couch she starteth,
To find some desperate instrument of death :
But this no slaughter-house no tool imparteth,
To make more vent for passage of her breath,
Which, thronging through her lips, so vanisheth
As smoke from *Ætna*, that in air consumes,
Or that which from discharged cannon fumes.

¹ Value.

‘ In vain,’ quoth she, ‘ I live, and seek in vain
Some happy mean to end a hapless life.
I fear’d by Tarquin’s falchion to be slain,
Yet for the selfsame purpose seek a knife :
But when I fear’d, I was a loyal wife ;
 So am I now.—O, no, that cannot be :
 Of that true type hath Tarquin rifled me.

‘ O, that is gone, for which I sought to live ;
And therefore now I need not fear to die :
To clear this spot by death, at least I give
A badge of fame to slander’s livery ;
A dying life to living infamy.
 Poor, helpless help, the treasure stolen away,
 To burn the guiltless casket where it lay !

‘ Well, well, dear Collatine, thou shalt not know
The stained taste of violated troth ;
I will not wrong thy true affection so,
To flatter thee with an infringed oath :
This bastard graff shall never come to growth :
 He shall not boast, who did thy stock pollute,
 That thou art doting father of his fruit :

‘ Nor shall he smile at thee in secret thought,
Nor laugh with his companions at thy state ;
But thou shalt know thy interest was not bought
Basely with gold, but stolen from forth thy gate.
For me, I am the mistress of my fate ;
 And with my trespass never will dispense,
 Till life to death acquit my forced offence.

• I will not poison thee with my attain't,
Nor fold my fault in cleanly-coin'd excuses;
My sable ground of sin I will not paint,
To hide the truth of this false night's abuses:
My tongue shall utter all; mine eyes, like sluices,
As from a mountain-spring that feeds a dale,
Shall gush pure streams to purge my impure tale.'

By this, lamenting Philomel had ended
The well-tuned warble of her nightly sorrow;
And solemn night with slow-sad gait descended
To ugly hell; when, lo, the blushing morrow
Lends light to all fair eyes that light will borrow:
But cloudy Lucrece shames herself to see,
And therefore still in night would cloister'd be.

‘ And for, poor bird, thou sing’st not in **the day**.
As shaming any eye should thee behold,
Some dark, deep desert, seated from the **way**.
That knows not parching heat nor freezing cold,
We will find out; and there we will unfold
To creatures stern sad tunes, to change *their*
kinds:
Since men prove beasts, let beasts bear gentle
minds.’

As the poor frightened deer, that stands at gaze,
Wildly determining which way to fly;
Or one encompass’d with a winding maze,
That cannot tread the way out readily;
So with herself is she in mutiny,
To live or die which of the twain were better,
When life is shamed, and Death Reproach’s
debtor.

‘ To kill myself,’ quoth she; ‘ alack! what were
it,
But with my body my poor soul’s pollution?
They that lose half, with greater patience bear it.
Than they whose whole is swallow’d in confusion.
That mother tries a merciless conclusion,¹
Who, having two sweet babes, when death takes
one,
Will slay the other, and be nurse to none.

¹ Experiment.

• My body or my soul, which was the dearer?
When the one pure, the other made divine:
Whose love of either to myself was nearer?
When both were kept for heaven and Collatine.
Ah me! the bark peel'd from the lofty pine,
His leaves will wither, and his sap decay;
So must my soul, her bark being peel'd away.

• Her house is sack'd, her quiet interrupted;
Her mansion batter'd by the enemy;
Her sacred temple spotted, spoil'd, corrupted,
Grossly engirt with daring infamy:
Then let it not be call'd impiety,
If in this blemish'd fort I make some hole,
Through which I may convey this troubled
soul.

• Yet die I will not, till my Collatine
Have heard the cause of my untimely death;
That he may vow, in that sad hour of mine,
Revenge on him that made me stop my breath.
My stained blood to Tarquin I'll bequeathe;
Which, by him tainted, shall for him be spent;
And, as his due, writ in my testament.

• My honor I'll bequeathe unto the knife
That wounds my body so dishonored.
'Tis honor to deprive dishonor'd life;
The one will live, the other being dead:
So of shame's ashes shall my fame be bred;

Whose swift obedience to her mistress hies :
For fleet-wing'd duty with thought's feathers flies.
Poor Lucrece' cheeks unto her maid seem so
As winter meads, when sun doth melt their
snow.

Her mistress she doth give demure good-morrow
With soft-slow tongue, true mark of modesty ;
And sorts ¹ a sad look to her lady's sorrow ;
(For why ? her face wore sorrow's livery)
But durst not ask of her audaciously
Why her two suns were cloud-eclipsed so,
Nor why her fair cheeks overwash'd with woe :

But as the earth doth weep, the sun being set,
Each flower moisten'd like a melting eye ;
Even so the maid with swelling drops 'gan wet
Her circled eyne, enforced by sympathy
Of those fair suns, set in her mistress' sky,
Who in a salt-waved ocean quench their light.
Which makes the maid weep like the dewy
night.

A pretty while these pretty creatures stand,
Like ivory conduits coral cisterns filling :
One justly weeps ; the other takes in hand
No cause, but company, of her drops spilling .
Their gentle sex to weep are often willing ;

¹ Chocsa.

Grieving themselves to guess at others' smarts :
And then they drown their eyes, or break their
 hearts :

For men have marble, women waxen minds,
And therefore are they form'd as marble will :
The weak oppress'd, the impression of strange kinds
Is form'd in them by force, by fraud, or skill :
Then call them not the authors of their ill,
 No more than wax shall be accounted evil,
 Wherein is stamp'd the semblance of a devil.

Their smoothness, like a goodly champaign plain,
Lays open all the little worms that creep :
In men, as in a rough-grown grove, remain
Cave-keeping evils that obscurely sleep.
Through crystal walls each little mote will peep :
 Though men can cover crimes with bold, stern
 looks,
Poor women's faces are their own faults' books.

No man inveigh against the wither'd flower,
But chide rough winter that the flower hath kill'd !
Not that devour'd, but that which doth devour,
Is worthy blame. O, let it not be hild !
Poor women's faults, that they are so fulfill'd
 With men's abuses : those proud lords, to blame,
 Make weak-made women tenants to their shame.

The precedent whereof in Lucrece view.
Assail'd by night with circumstances strong
Of present death, and shame that might ensue
By that her death, to do her husband wrong :
Such danger to resistance did belong,
That dying fear through all her body spread ;
And who cannot abuse a body dead ?

By this, mild patience bid fair Lucrece speak
To the poor counterfeit of her complaining :
' My girl,' quoth she, ' on what occasion break
Those tears from thee, that down thy cheeks are
raining ?
' If thou dost weep for grief of my sustaining,
Know, gentle wench, it small avails my mood :
If tears could help, mine own would do me
good.

' But tell me, girl, when went'—(and there she
stay'd
Till after a deep groan) ' Tarquin from hence ? '
' Madam, ere I was up,' replied the maid ;
' The more to blame my sluggard negligence :
Yet with the fault I thus far can dispense :—
Myself was stirring ere the break of day ;
And, ere I rose, was Tarquin gone away.

' But, lady, if your maid may be so bold,
She would request to know your heaviness.'
' O, peace ! ' quoth Lucrece : ' if it should be told.

Here folds she up the tenor of her woe,
Her certain sorrow writ uncertainly.
By this short schedule Collatine may know
Her grief, but not her grief's true quality:
She dares not thereof make discovery;
Lest he should hold it her own gross abuse,
Ere she with blood had stain'd her stain'd excuse.

Besides, the life and feeling of her passion
She hoards, to spend when he is by to hear her;
When sighs, and groans, and tears may grace the
fashion
Of her disgrace, the better so to clear her
From that suspicion which the world might bear
her.

To shun this blot, she would not blot the letter
With words, till action might become them
better.

To see sad sights moves more than hear them
told;

For then the eye interprets to the ear
The heavy motion that it doth behold.

When every part a part of woe doth bear,

'Tis but a part of sorrow that we hear:

Deep sounds make lesser noise than shallow
words:

And sorrow ebbs, being blown with wind of
words.

And, blushing with him, wistly¹ on him gazed;
Her earnest eye did make him more amazed:
The more she saw the blood his cheeks replenish,
The more she thought he spied in her some
blemish.

But long she thinks till he return again,
And yet the duteous vassal scarce is gone.
The weary time she cannot entertain,
For now 'tis stale to sigh, to weep, and groan.
So woe hath wearied woe, moan tired moan,
That she her plaints a little while doth stay,
Pausing for means to mourn some newer way.

At last, she calls to mind where hangs a piece
Of skilful painting, made for Priam's Troy;
Before the which is drawn the power of Greece,
For Helen's rape the city to destroy,
Threatening cloud-kissing Ilion with annoy;
Which the conceited² painter drew so proud,
As heaven, it seem'd, to kiss the turrets bow'd.

A thousand lamentable objects there,
In scorn of Nature, Art gave lifeless life:
Many a dry drop seem'd a weeping tear,
Shed for the slaughter'd husband by the wife:
The red blood reek'd to show the painter's strife;

¹ Attentively.

² Fanciful, ingenious.

And dying eyes gleam'd forth their ashy lights,
Like dying coals burnt out in tedious nights.

There might you see the laboring pioneer
Begrimed with sweat, and smeared all with dust .
And from the towers of Troy there would appear
'The very eyes of men through loopholes thrust,
Gazing upon the Greeks with little lust.

Such sweet observance in this work was had,
That one might see those far-off eyes look sad.

In great commanders grace and majesty
You might behold, triumphing in their faces ;
In youth, quick bearing and dexterity ;
And here and there the painter interlaces
Pale cowards, marching on with trembling paces ;
Which heartless peasants did so well resemble,
That one would swear he saw them quake and
tremble.

In Ajax and Ulysses, O, what art
Of physiognomy might one behold !
The face of either 'cipher'd either's heart ;
Their face their manners most expressly told :
In Ajax' eyes blunt rage and rigor roll'd ;
But the mild glance that sly Ulysses lent,
Show'd deep regard and smiling government.

'There pleading might you see grave Nestor stand,
As 'twere encouraging the Greeks to fight ;
Making such sober action with his hand.

That it beguiled attention, charm'd the sight.
In speech, it seem'd, his beard, all silver white,
Wagg'd up and down ; and from his lips did fly
Thin winding breath, which purl'd up to the sky.

About him were a press of gaping faces,
Which seem'd to swallow up his sound advice ;
All jointly listening, but with several graces,
As if some mermaid did their ears entice ;
Some high, some low, the painter was so nice :
The scalps of many, almost hid behind,
To jump up higher seem'd, to mock the mind.

Here one man's hand lean'd on another's head,
His nose being shadow'd by his neighbor's ear ;
Here one, being throng'd, bears back, all bollen¹
and red ;
Another, smother'd, seems to pelt² and swear :
And in their rage such signs of rage they bear,
As, but for loss of Nestor's golden words,
It seem'd they would debate with angry swords :

For much imaginary work was there ;
Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind,³
That for Achilles' image stood his spear.
Griped in an armed hand ; himself, behind,
Was left unseen, save to the eye of mind :

¹ Swollen.

² i. e. be in a clamorous passion.

³ Natural.

In her the painter had anatomised
Time's ruin, beauty's wreck, and grim care's reign :
Her cheeks with chaps and wrinkles were disguised ;
Of what she was no semblance did remain :
Her blue blood, changed to black in every vein,
 Wanting the spring that those shrunk pipes had
 fed,
Show'd life imprison'd in a body dead.

On this sad shadow Lucrece spends her eyes,
And shapes her sorrow to the beldam's woes,
Who nothing wants to answer her but cries,
And bitter words to ban her cruel foes :
The painter was no god to lend her those ;
 And therefore Lucrece swears he did her wrong,
 To give her so much grief, and not a tongue.

‘ Poor instrument,’ quoth she, ‘ without a sound,
I'll tune thy woes with my lamenting tongue ;
And drop sweet balm in Priam's painted wound ;
And rail on Pyrrhus that hath done him wrong ;
And with my tears quench Troy, that burus so
 long ;
And with my knife scratch out the angry eyes
Of all the Greeks that are thine enemies.

‘ Show me the strumpet that began this stir,
That with my nails her beauty I may tear :
Thy heat of lust, fond Paris, did incur
This load of wrath that burning Troy doth bear ;
Thy eye kindled the fire that burneth here :

And here in Troy, for trespass of thine eye,
The sire, the son, the dame, and daughter die.

‘ Why should the private pleasure of some one
Become the public plague of many mo? ¹
Let sin, alone committed, light alone
Upon his head that hath transgressed so.
Let guiltless souls be freed from guilty woe.
For one’s offence why should so many fall,
To plague a private sin in general?

‘ Lo, here weeps Hecuba, here Priam dies,
Here manly Hector faints, here Troilus swoonds;
Here friend by friend in bloody channel lies,
And friend to friend gives unadvised ² wounds,
And one man’s lust these many lives confounds.
Had doting Priam check’d his son’s desire,
Troy had been bright with fame, and not with
fire.’

Here feelingly she weeps Troy’s painted woes :
For sorrow, like a heavy-hanging bell,
Once set on ringing, with his own weight goes :
Then little strength rings out the doleful knell :
So Lucrece, set a-work, sad tales doth tell
To pencill’d pensiveness and color’d sorrow .
She lends them words, and she their looks doth
borrow.

¹ More.

² Unintentional.

She throws her eyes about the painting, bound,
 And whom she finds forlorn, she doth lament :
 At last, she sees a wretched image bound.
 That piteous looks to Phrygian shepherds lent :
 His face, though full of cares, yet show'd content :
 Onward to Troy with the blunt swains he goes,
 So mild, that Patience seem'd to scorn his woes.

In him the painter labor'd with his skill
 To hide deceit, and give the harmless show
 An humble gait, calm looks, eyes wailing still,
 A brow unbent, that seem'd to welcome woe ;
 Cheeks, neither red nor pale, but mingled so,
 That blushing red no guilty instance¹ gave,
 Nor ashy pale the fear that false hearts have :

But, like a constant and confirmed devil,
 He entertain'd a show so seeming just,
 And therein so ensconced² his secret evil,
 That jealousy itself could not mistrust,
 False-creeping craft and perjury should thrust
 Into so bright a day such black-faced storms,
 Or blot with hell-born sin such saintlike forms.

The well-skill'd workman this mild image drew
 For perjured Sinon, whose enchanting story
 The credulous old Priam after slew ;

¹ Symptom.

² Concealed.

With inward vice : as Priam him did cherish,
So did I Tarquin ; so my Troy did perish.

‘ Look, look, how listening Priam wets his eyes,
To see those borrow’d tears that Sinon sheds.
Priam, why art thou old, and yet not wise ?
For every tear he falls a Trojan bleeds :
His eye drops fire ; no water thence proceeds :
Those round, clear pearls of his, that move thy
pity,
Are balls of quenchless fire to burn thy city.

‘ Such devils steal effects from lightless hell ;
For Sinon in his fire doth quake with cold ;
And in that cold, hot-burning fire doth dwell ;
These contraries such unity do hold,
Only to flatter fools, and make them bold ;
So Priam’s trust false Sinon’s tears doth flatter,
‘ That he finds means to burn his Troy with
water.’

Here, all enraged, such passion her assails,
That patience is quite beaten from her breast :
She tears the senseless Sinon with her nails,
Comparing him to that unhappy guest,
Whose deed hath made herself herself detest :
At last, she smilingly with this gives o’er :—
‘ Fool ! fool ! ’ quoth she ; ‘ his wounds will not
be sore.’

As through an arch the violent, roaring tide
 Outruns the eye that doth behold his haste.
 Yet in the eddy boundeth in his pride
 Back to the strait that forced him on so fast;
 In rage sent out, recall'd in rage, being past:
 Even so his sighs, his sorrows, make a saw,
 To push grief on, and back the same grief draw:

Which speechless woe of his poor she attendeth,
 And his untimely frenzy thus awaketh:—
 ' Dear lord, thy sorrow to my sorrow lendeth
 Another power: no flood by raining slaketh.
 My woe too sensible thy passion maketh
 More feeling-painful: let it then suffice
 To drown one woe, one pair of weeping eyes:

' And for my sake, when I might charm thee so,
 For she that was thy Lucrece,—now attend me:
 Be suddenly revenged on my foe,
 Thine, mine, his own; suppose thou dost defend
 me
 From what is past: the help that thou shalt lend
 me
 Comes all too late; yet let the traitor die:
 For sparing justice feeds iniquity.

' But ere I name him, you, fair lords,' quoth she.
 Speaking to those that came with Collatine.
 ' Shall plight your honorable faiths to me,
 With swift pursuit to venge this wrong of mine;
 For 'tis a meritorious, fair design,

To chase injustice with revengeful arms :
Knights, by their oaths, should right poor ladies
harms.'

At this request, with noble disposition
Each present lord began to promise aid,
As bound in knighthood to her imposition,
Longing to hear the hateful foe bewray'd :¹
But she, that yet her sad task hath not said,
The protestation stops. ' O, speak,' quoth she
' How may this forced stain be wiped from
me ?

' What is the quality of mine offence,
Being constrain'd with dreadful circumstance ?
May my pure mind with the foul act dispense,
My low-declined honor to advance ?
May any terms acquit me from this chance ?
The poison'd fountain clears itself again ;
And why not I from this compelled stain ?'

With this, they all at once began to say,
Her body's stain her mind untainted clears ;
While with a joyless smile she turns away
The face, that map, which deep impression bears
Of hard misfortune, carved in it with tears.
' No, no,' quoth she ; ' no dame, hereafter living
By my excuse shall claim excuse's giving.'

¹ Discovered.

Here, with a sigh, as if her heart would break.
She throws forth Tarquin's name: 'He, he.' she
says;
But more than 'he,' her poor tongue could not
speak;
Till, after many accents and delays,
Untimely breathings, sick and short assays,
She utters this:—'He, he, fair lords, 'tis he,
That guides this hand to give this wound to
me.'

Even here she sheathed in her harmless breast
A harmful knife, that thence her soul unsheathed:
That blow did bail it from the deep unrest
Of that polluted prison where it breathed:
Her contrite sighs unto the clouds bequeathed
Her winged sprite; and through her wounds
doth fly
Life's lasting date from cancell'd destiny.

Stone-still, astonish'd with this deadly deed,
Stood Collatine and all his lordly crew;
Till Lucrece' father, that beholds her bleed,
Himself on her self-slaughter'd body threw;
And from the purple fountain Brutus drew
The murderous knife; and as it left the place,
Her blood, in poor revenge, held it in chase;

And bubbling from her breast, it doth divide
In two slow rivers, that the crimson blood
Circles her body in on every side,

Who like a late-sack'd island vastly¹ stood.
Bare and unpeopled, in this fearful flood.
Some of her blood still pure and red remain'd ;
And some look'd black, and that false Tarquin
stain'd.

About the mourning and congealed face
Of that black blood, a watery rigol² goes,
Which seems to weep upon the tainted place :
And ever since, as pitying Lucrece' woes,
Corrupted blood some watery token shows ,
And blood untainted still doth red abide,
Blushing at that which is so putrefied.

' Daughter, dear daughter,' old Lucretius cries,
' That life was mine, which thou hast here deprived.
If in the child the father's image lies,
Where shall I live, now Lucrece is unliv'd ?
Thou wast not to this end from me derived.
If children predecease progenitors,
We are their offspring, and they none of ours.

' Poor broken glass, I often did behold
In thy sweet semblance my old age new-born ;
But now that fair, fresh mirror, dim and old,
Shows me a bareboned death by time outworn ;
O, from thy cheeks my image thou hast torn,
And shiver'd all the beauty of my glass,
' That I no more can see what once I was.

¹ i. e. like a waste.

² Circle.

‘ O time, cease thou thy course, and last no longer,

If they surcease to be, that should survive.
Shall rotten death make conquest of the stronger.
And leave the faltering, feeble souls alive ?
The old bees die, the young possess their hive :
Then live, sweet Lucrece, live again, and see
Thy father die, and not thy father thee !’

By this starts Collatine as from a dream,
And bids Lucretius give his sorrow place ;
And then in key-cold Lucrece’ bleeding stream
He falls, and bathes the pale fear in his face,
And counterfeits to die with her a space ;
Till manly shame bids him possess his breath,
And live, to be revenged on her death.

The deep vexation of his inward soul
Hath served a dumb arrest upon his tongue ;
Who, mad that sorrow should his use control,
Or keep him from heart-easing words so long.
Begins to talk ; but through his lips do throng
Weak words, so thick come, in his poor heart’s
aid,

That no man could distinguish what he said :

Yet sometime Tarquin was pronounced plain,
But through his teeth, as if the name he tore.
This windy tempest, till it blow up rain,
Held back his sorrow’s tide, to make it more :
At last it rains, and busy winds give o’er.

Then son and father weep with equal strife.
Who should weep most for daughter or for wife.

The one doth call her his, the other his,
Yet neither may possess the claim they lay.
The father says, 'She 's mine.'—'O, mine she is,'
Replies her husband: 'do not take away
My sorrow's interest; let no mourner say
He weeps for her; for she was only mine,
And only must be wail'd by Collatine.'

'O,' quoth Lucretius, 'I did give that life,
Which she too early and too late¹ hath spill'd.'
'Woe, woe!' quoth Collatine; 'she was my wife;
I owed her, and 'tis mine that she hath kill'd.'
'My daughter!' and 'My wife!' with clamors
fill'd

The dispersed air, who, holding Lucrece' life,
Answer'd their cries, 'My daughter!' and 'My
wife!'

Brutus, who pluck'd the knife from Lucrece' side,
Seeing such emulation in their woe,
Began to clothe his wit in state and pride,
Burying in Lucrece' wound his folly's show.
He with the Romans was esteemed so
As silly-jeering idiots are with kings,
For sportive words, and uttering foolish things:

¹ Too recently.

But now he throws that shallow habit by,
 Wherein deep policy did him disguise;
 And arm'd his long-hid wits advisedly,
 To check the tears in Collatinus' eyes.
 'Thou wronged lord of Rome,' quoth he, ' arise;
 Let my unsounded self, supposed a fool,
 Now set thy long-experienced wit to school.

' Why, Collatine, is woe the cure for woe?
 Do wounds help wounds, or grief help grievous
 deeds?

Is it revenge to give thyself a blow,
 For his foul act by whom thy fair wife bleeds?
 Such childish humor from weak minds proceeds:
 Thy wretched wife mistook the matter so,
 To slay herself, that should have slain her
 foe.

' Courageous Roman, do not steep thy heart
 In such relenting dew of lamentations;
 But kneel with me, and help to bear thy part,
 To rouse our Roman gods with invocations;
 That they will suffer these abominations,
 (Since Rome herself in them doth stand dis-
 graced)
 By our strong arms from forth her fair streets
 chased.¹

¹ The construction is,—' that they will suffer these abomi-
 nations to be chased,' &c.

' Now, by the Capito! that we adore ;
And by this chaste blood so unjustly stain'd ;
By heaven's fair sun, that breeds the fat earth's
store ;
By all our country rights in Rome maintain'd ;
And by chaste Lucrece' soul, that late complain'd
Her wrongs to us, and by this bloody knife ;—
We will revenge the death of this true wife.'

This said, he struck his hand upon his breast,
And kiss'd the fatal knife to end his vow ;
And to his protestation urged the rest,
Who, wondering at him, did his words allow :¹
Then jointly to the ground their knees they bow
And that deep vow which Brutus made before,
He doth again repeat, and that they swore.

When they had sworn to this advised doom,
They did conclude to bear dead Lucrece thence ;
'To show her bleeding body thorough Rome,
And so to publish 'Tarquin's foul offence :
Which being done with speedy diligence,
The Romans plausibly² did give consent
'To Tarquin's everlasting banishment.

¹ Approve.

² I. e. with acclamation.

SONNETS.

SONNETS.

[Shakspeare's Sonnets were entered on the books of the Stationers' Company, May 20th, 1609, by Thomas Thorpe, who prefixed the following dedication:—'To the only beggetter of these ensuing Sonnets, Mr. W. H., all happiness, and that eternity-promised by our ever-living poet, wisheth the well-wishing adventurer in setting forth, 'T. T.' In the course of the same year these Sonnets were printed in quarto: they were, however, written long before this period. since they are mentioned as a work of great popularity by Meres, in his Wit's Treasury, which was published in 1598. Malone remarks, that 'the general style of these poems, and the numerous passages in them which remind us of our author's plays, leave not the smallest doubt of their authenticity.']

I.

FROM fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the ripper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel,

Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament,
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content.
And, tender churl, makest waste in niggarding.
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

II.

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held :
Then, being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days ;
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
Were an all-eating shame, and thriftless praise.
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,
If thou couldst answer, — ' This fair child of mine
Shall sum my count, and make my old excuse, —
Proving his beauty by succession thine.
'This were to be new-made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it
cold.

III.

Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest,
Now is the time that face should form another ;
Whose fresh repair if now thou not renewest,
Thou dost beguile the world, unbless some mother :

For where is she so fair, whose unear'd¹ womb
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond,² will be the tomb
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime:
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see,
Despite of wrinkles, this thy golden time.
But if thou live, remember'd not to be,
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

IV.

Unthrifty loveliness, why dost thou spend
Upon thyself thy beauty's legacy?
Nature's bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,
And being frank, she lends to those are free.
'Then, beauteous niggard, why dost thou abuse
The bounteous largess given thee to give?
Profitless usurer, why dost thou use
So great a sum of sums, yet canst not live?
For having traffic with thyself alone,
Thou of thyself thy sweet self dost deceive:
Then how, when Nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable audit canst thou leave?
Thy unused beauty must be tomb'd with thee,
Which, used, lives thy executor to be.

¹ Unploughed.

² Foolish

V.

Those hours, that with gentle work did frame
 The lovely gaze where every eye doth dwell,
 Will play the tyrants to the very same,
 And that unfair, which fairly doth excel;¹
 For never-resting time leads summer on
 To hideous winter, and confounds him there;
 Sap check'd with frost, and lusty leaves quite gone,
 Beauty o'ersnow'd, and bareness every where:
 Then, were not summer's distillation left,
 A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass,
 Beauty's effect with beauty were bereft,
 Nor it, nor no remembrance what it was:
 But flowers distill'd, though they with winter
 meet,
 Leese² but their show; their substance still lives
 sweet.

VI.

Then let not winter's ragged hand deface
 In thee thy summer, ere thou be distill'd:
 Make sweet some phial; treasure thou some place
 With beauty's treasure, ere it be self-kill'd.
 That use is not forbidden usury,
 Which happies those that pay the willing loan;

¹ i. e. and render that which was once beautiful no longer fair.

² Less.

That 's for thyself to breed another thee,
Or ten times happier, be it ten for one ;
Ten times thyself were happier than thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigured thee :
Then, what could Death do, if thou shouldst
depart,
Leaving thee living in posterity ?
Be not self-will'd ; for thou art much too fair
To be Death's conquest, and make worms thine
heir.

VII.

Lo, in the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,
Serving with looks his sacred majesty ;
And, having climb'd the steep-up heavenly hill.
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,
Attending on his golden pilgrimage :
But when from highmost pitch, with weary car,
Like feeble age, he reeleth from the day,
The eyes, 'fore duteous, now converted are
From his low tract, and look another way :
So thou, thyself outgoing in thy noon.
Unlook'd on diest, unless thou get a son.

VIII.

Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly ?¹
 Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy.
 Why lovest thou that which thou receivest ~~not~~
 gladly ;

Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy ?
 If the true concord of well-tuned sounds,
 By unions married, do offend thine ear,
 They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
 In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.
 Mark, how one string, sweet husband to another,
 Strikes each in each by mutual ordering ;
 Resembling sire, and child, and happy mother ;
 Who, all in one, one pleasing note do sing :
 Whose speechless song, being many, seeming
 one,
 Sings this to thee ;—'Thou single wilt prove
 none.'

IX.

Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye,
 That thou consumest thyself in single life ?
 Ah ! if thou issueless shalt hap to die,
 The world will wail thee, like a makeless² wife :

¹ i. e. O thou, whom to hear is music, why hearest thou.
 &c.

² i. e. mateless. Make and mate were formerly synonymous.

The world will be thy widow, and still weep,
That thou no form of thee hast left behind;
When every private widow well may keep,
By children's eyes, her husband's shape in mind.
Look, what an unthrift in the world doth spend.
Shifts but his place, for still the world enjoys it;
But beauty's waste bath in the world an end;
And, kept unused, the user so destroys it.
No love toward others in that bosom sits,
That on himself such murderous shame commits.

X.

For shame! deny that thou bear'st love to any,
Who for thyself art so unprovident:
Grant, if thou wilt, thou art beloved of many;
But that thou none lovest, is most evident;
For thou art so possess'd with murderous hate,
That 'gainst thyself thou stick'st not to conspire,
Seeking that beauteous roof to ruinate,
Which to repair should be thy chief desire.
O, change thy thought, that I may change my
mind!
Shall hate be fairer lodged than gentle love?
Be, as thy presence is, gracious and kind;
Or to thyself, at least, kind-hearted prove:
Make thee another self, for love of me,
That beauty still may live in thine or thee.

XI.

As fast as thou shalt wane, so fast thou growest,
In one of thine, from that which thou departest ;
And that fresh blood, which youngly thou bestowest
'Thou mayst call thine, when thou from youth convertest.

Herein lives wisdom, beauty, and increase ;
Without this, folly, age, and cold decay :
If all were minded so, the times should cease,
And threescore years would make the world away.
Let those, whom Nature hath not made for store,¹
Harsh, featureless, and rude, barrenly perish :
Look, whom she best endow'd, she gave thee
more ;

Which bounteous gift thou shouldst in bounty
cherish :

She carved thee for her seal, and meant thereby,
Thou shouldst print more, nor let that copy die.

XII.

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave day sunk in hideous night ;
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white ;
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd ;

¹ i. e. to be preserved for use.

And summer's green all girded up in sheaves,
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard;—
Then of thy beauty do I question make,
That thou among the wastes of time must go,
Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake,
And die as fast as they see others grow;
And nothing 'gainst time's scythe can make defence,
Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.

XIII.

O, that you were yourself! but, love, you are
No longer yours, than you yourself here live:
Against this coming end you should prepare,
And your sweet semblance to some other give:
So should that beauty, which you hold in lease,
Find no determination: then you were
Yourself again, after yourself's decease,
When your sweet issue your sweet form should bear.

Who lets so fair a house fall to decay,
Which husbandry in honor might uphold
Against the stormy gusts of winter's day,
And barren rage of death's eternal cold?

O, none but unthrifths!—Dear my love, you
know,

You had a father; let your son say so.

XIV.

Not from the stars do I my judgment pluck ;
And yet, methinks, I have astronomy ;
But not to tell of good or evil luck,
Of plagues, of dearths, or seasons' quality :
Nor can I fortune to brief minutes tell,
Pointing to each his thunder, rain, and wind ;
Or say, with princes if it shall go well,
By oft predict that I in heaven find :
But from thine eyes my knowlege I derive ;
And, constant stars, in them I read such art,
As truth and beauty shall together thrive,
If from thyself to store thou wouldst convert ;¹
Or else of thee this I prognosticate ;—
Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date.

XV.

When I consider every thing that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment ;
That this huge state presenteth naught but shows,
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment ;
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and check'd even by the selfsame sky ;
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory ;—

¹ i. e. if thou wouldst change thy single state, and beget a numerous progeny.

Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
 Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
 Where wasteful time debateth with decay,
 To change your day of youth to sullied night;
 And, all in war with time, for love of you,
 As he takes from you, I engraft you new.

XVI.

But wherefore do not you a mightier way
 Make war upon this bloody tyrant, Time?
 And fortify yourself in your decay
 With means more blessed than my barren rhyme?
 Now stand you on the top of happy hours;
 And many maiden gardens, yet unset,
 With virtuous wish would bear you living flowers
 Much liker than your painted counterfeit:¹
 So should the lines of life that life repair,
 Which this, Time's pencil, or my pupil pen,
 Neither in inward worth, nor outward fair,²
 Can make you live yourself in eyes of men.
 To give away yourself, keeps yourself still;
 And you must live, drawn by your own sweet
 skill.

XVII.

Who will believe my verse in time to come.
 If it were fill'd with your most high deserts?

¹ Portrait.

² Beauty.

Though yet, Heaven knows, it is but as a tomb,
Which hides your life, and shows not half your
parts.

If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
And in fresh numbers number all your graces;
The age to come would say, this poet lies;
Such heavenly touches ne'er touch'd earthly faces.
So should my papers, yellow'd with their age,
Be scorn'd, like old men of less truth than tongue;
And your true rights be term'd a poet's rage,
And stretched metre of an antique song:
But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice;—in it, and in my rhyme.

XVIII.

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd:
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;¹
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest.

¹ i. e. of that beauty thou possessest.

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee

XIX.

Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,
And make the earth devour her own sweet brood;
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
And burn the long-lived phoenix in her blood:
Make glad and sorry seasons, as thou fleet'st,
And do whate'er thou wilt, swift-footed Time,
To the wide world, and all her fading sweets;
But I forbid thee one most heinous crime:—
O, carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,
Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen:
Him in thy course untainted do allow,
For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.
Yet, do thy worst, old Time: despite thy wrong,
My love shall in my verse ever live young.

XX.

A woman's face, with Nature's own hand painted,
Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted
With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;
An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,
Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
A man in hue all hues in his controlling,
Which steals men's eyes, and women's souls
amazeth.

And for a woman wert thou first created ;
 Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a doting ;
 And by addition me of thee defeated,
 By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.

But since she prick'd thee out for women's
 pleasure,

Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their treasure.

XXI.

So is it not with me as with that Muse,
 Stirr'd by a painted beauty to his verse ;
 Who heaven itself for ornament doth use,
 And every fair with his fair doth rehearse ;
 Making a couplement of proud compare,
 With sun and moon, with earth and sea's rich
 gems,

With April's first-born flowers, and all things rare
 That heaven's air in this huge rondure¹ hems.

O, let me, true in love, but truly write ;
 And then believe me, my love is as fair
 As any mother's child, though not so bright
 As those gold candles fix'd in heaven's air.

Let them say more that like of hearsay well ;
 I will not praise, that purpose not to sell.

¹ 1 a. round, circumference.

XXII.

My glass shall not persuade me I am old.
 So long as youth and thou are of one date;
 But when in thee time's furrows I behold,
 Then look I death my days should expiate.¹
 For all that beauty that doth cover thee,
 Is but the seemly raiment of my heart,
 Which in thy breast doth live, as thine in me:
 How can I then be elder than thou art?
 O, therefore, love, be of thyself so wary,
 As I not for myself but for thee will;
 Bearing thy heart, which I will keep so chary
 As tender nurse her babe from faring ill.
 Presume not on thy heart when mine is slain;
 Thou gavest me thine, not to give back again.

XXIII.

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
 Who with his fear is put besides his part,
 Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
 Whose strength's abundance weakens his own
 heart;—
 So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
 The perfect ceremony of love's rite;
 And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
 O'ercharged with burthen of mine own love's might

¹ i. e. fill up the measure of my days.

O, let my books be then the eloquence
And dumb presagers of my speaking breast ;
Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
More than that tongue that more hath more express'd.

O, learn to read what silent love hath writ :
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

XXIV.

Mine eye hath play'd the painter, and hath steel'd
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart :
My body is the frame wherein 'tis held,
And perspective it is best painter's art :
For through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where your true image pictured lies,
Which in my bosom's shop is hanging still,
That hath his windows glazed with thine eyes.
Now see what good turns eyes for eyes have done :
Mine eyes have drawn thy shape, and thine for me
Are windows to my breast, where-through the sun
Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee :
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art ;—
They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

XXV.

Let those who are in favor with their stars,
Of public honor and proud titles boast ;
Whilst I, whom Fortune of such triumph bars,
Unlook'd-for joy in that ' honor most.

Great princes' favorites their fair leaves spread,
But as the marigold at the sun's eye ;
And in themselves their pride lies buried ;
For at a frown they in their glory die.
'The painful warrior famoused for fight,
After a thousand victories once foil'd,
Is from the book of honor rased quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd :
Then happy I, that love and am beloved,
Where I may not remove, nor be removed.

XXVI.

Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,
To thee I send this written embassy,
To witness duty, not to show my wit :
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in wanting words to show it ;
But that I hope some good conceit of thine
In thy soul's thought, all naked, will bestow it :
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving,
Points on me graciously with fair aspect,
And puts apparel on my tatter'd loving,
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect :
Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee ;
Till then, not show my head where thou mayst
prove me.

XXVII.

Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired ;
But then begins a journey in my head,
To work my mind, when body's work 's expired :
For then my thoughts (from far where I abide)
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see :
Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous, and her old face
new.

Lo, thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
For thee, and for myself, no quiet find.

XXVIII.

How can I then return in happy plight,
That am debarr'd the benefit of rest ;
When day's oppression is not eased by night,
But day by night, and night by day oppress'd ?
And each, though enemies to either's reign,
Do in consent shake hands to torture me ;
The one by toil, the other to complain
How far I toil, still farther off from thee.
I tell the day, to please him, thou art bright.
And dost him grace when clouds do blot the
heaven :

So flatter I the swart-complexion'd night;
When sparkling stars twire¹ not, thou gild'st the
even.

But day doth daily draw my sorrows longer,
And night doth nightly make grief's length seem
stronger.

XXIX.

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweepe my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee; and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate:
For thy sweet love remember'd, such wealth
brings,
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

XXX.

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,

¹ Peep.

I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste :
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long-since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight :
'Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before :
 But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
 All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

XXXI.

Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts,
Which I by lacking have supposed dead ;
And there reigns love, and all love's loving parts,
And all those friends which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obsequious ¹ tear
Hath dear religious love stolen from mine eye,
As interest of the dead, which now appear
But things removed, that hidden in thee lie !
Thou art the grave where buried love doth live,
Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,
Who all their parts of me to thee did give ;
That due of many now is thine alone.
 Their images I loved I view in thee ;
 And thou, all they, hast all the all of me.

¹ Funereal.

XXXII.

If thou survive my well-contented day,
When that churl Death my bones with dust shall
cover,

And shalt by fortune once more resurvey
These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover;—
Compare them with the bettering of the time;
And though they be outstripp'd by every pen,
Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,
Exceeded by the height of happier men.

O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:—
'Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing
age,

A dearer birth than this his love had brought,
To march in ranks of better equipage:
But since he died, and poets better prove,
Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his love.'

XXXIII.

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchymy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack¹ on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:

¹ Vapors.

Even so my sun one early morn did shine,
With all triumphant splendor on my brow ;
But, out, alack ! he was but one hour mine :
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth ;
Suns of the world may stain, when heaven's sun
staineth.

XXXIV.

Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day,
And make me travel forth without my cloak,
To let base clouds o'ertake me in my way,
Hiding thy bravery in their rotten smoke ?
'Tis not enough that through the cloud thou break,
To dry the rain on my storm-beaten face,
For no man well of such a salve can speak,
That heals the wound, and cures not the disgrace :
Nor can thy shame give physic to my grief ;
Though thou repent, yet I have still the loss :
The offender's sorrow lends but weak relief
To him that bears the strong offence's cross.
Ah ! but those tears are pearl which thy love
sheds ;
And they are rich, and ransom all ill deeds.

XXXV.

No more be grieved at that which thou hast done :
Roses have thorns, and silver fountains mud ;
Clouds and eclipses stain both moon and sun,
And loathsome canker lives in sweetest bud.

All men make faults, and even I in this,
 Authorising thy trespass with compare,
 Myself corrupting, salving thy amies,¹
 Excusing thy sins more than thy sins are :²
 For to thy sensual fault I bring in sense,
 (Thy adverse party is thy advocate)
 And 'gainst myself a lawful plea commence :
 Such civil war is in my love and hate,
 That I an accessory needs must be
 To that sweet thief, which sourly robs from me.

XXXVI.

Let me confess that we two must be twain,
 Although our undivided loves are one :
 So shall those blots that do with me remain,
 Without thy help, by me be borne alone.
 In our two loves there is but one respect,
 Though in our lives a separable spite ;³
 Which, though it alter not love's sole effect,
 Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love's delight.
 I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
 Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame ;
 Nor thou with public kindness honor me,
 Unless thou take that honor from thy name :

¹ Misbehavior.

² i. e. making the excuse more than proportioned to the offence.

³ i. e. a cruel fate, that spitefully separates us from each other

But do not so : I love thee in such sort.
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

XXXVII.

As a decrepit father takes delight
To see his active child do deeds of youth ;
So I, made lame by fortune's dearest ¹ spite,
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth ;
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more,
Entitled in thy parts ² do crowned sit,
I make my love engrafted to this store :
So then I am not lame, poor, nor despised,
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance give,
That I in thy abundance am sufficed,
And by a part of all thy glory live.
Look what is best, that best I wish in thee :
This wish I have ; then ten times happy me !

XXXVIII.

How can my Muse want subject to invent,
While thou dost breathe, that pour'st into my verse
Thine own sweet argument, too excellent
For every vulgar paper to rehearse ?
O, give thyself the thanks, if aught in me.
Worthy perusal, stand against thy sight ,

¹ Most inveterate.

² i. e. having a claim or title to thy parts.

For who's so dumb that cannot write to thee,
When thou thyself dost give invention light?
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine, which rhymers invoke;
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.

If my slight Muse do please these curious days,
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.

XXXIX.

O, how thy worth with manners may I sing,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine own praise to mine own self bring?
And what is't but mine own, when I praise thee?
Even for this let us divided live,
And our dear love lose name of single one;
That by this separation I may give
That due to thee, which thou deservest alone.
O absence, what a torment wouldst thou prove,
Were it not thy sour leisure gave sweet leave
To entertain the time with thoughts of love,
Which time and thoughts so sweetly doth de-
ceive;

And that thou teachest how to make one twain,
By praising him here, who doth hence remain!

XL.

Take all my loves, my love, yea, take them all;
What hast thou then more than thou hadst before?

No love, my love, that thou mayst true love call;
All mine was thine, before thou hadst this more.
Then, if for my love thou my love receivest,
I cannot blame thee, for my love thou usest;
But yet be blamed, if thou thyself deceivest
By wilful taste of what thyself refusest.
I do forgive thy robbery, gentle thief,
Although thou steal thee all my poverty;
And yet love knows, it is a greater grief
To bear love's wrong, than hate's known injury.
Lascivious grace, in whom all ill well shows,
Kill me with spites; yet we must not be foes.

XLI.

Those petty wrongs that liberty commits,
When I am sometime absent from thy heart,
Thy beauty and thy years full well befits,
For still temptation follows where thou art.
Gentle thou art, and therefore to be won;
Beauteous thou art, therefore to be assail'd;
And when a woman woos, what woman's son
Will sourly leave her till she have prevail'd?
Ah me! but yet thou mightst, my sweet, forbear,
And chide thy beauty and thy straying youth,
Who lead thee in their riot even there
Where thou art forced to break a twofold truth;
Hers, by thy beauty tempting her to thee;
Thine, by thy beauty being false to me.

XLII.

That thou hast her, it is not all my grief ;
And yet it may be said I loved her dearly :
That she hath thee, is of my wailing chief ;
A loss in love that touches me more nearly.
Loving offenders, thus I will excuse ye :—
'Thou dost love her, because thou knew'st I lo
her ;

And for my sake even so doth she abuse me,
Suffering my friend for my sake to approve her.
If I lose thee, my loss is my love's gain ;
And losing her, my friend hath found that loss ;
Both find each other, and I lose both twain,
And both for my sake lay on me this cross :
But here 's the joy ; my friend and I are one :
Sweet flattery ! then she loves but me alone.

XLIII.

When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things unrespected : ¹
But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
And, darkly bright, are bright in dark directed.
Then thou, whose shadow shadows doth make
bright,
How would thy shadow's form form happy show

¹ Unregarded.

To the clear day with thy much clearer light,
 When to unseeing eyes thy shade shines so ?
 How would, I say, mine eyes be blessed made
 By looking on thee in the living day ;
 When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade
 Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay ?
 All days are nights to see, till I see thee ;
 And nights, bright days, when dreams do show
 thee me.

XLIV.

If the dull substance of my flesh were thought,
 Injurious distance should not stop my way ;
 For then, despite of space, I would be brought
 From limits far remote, where thou dost stay.
 No matter then, although my foot did stand
 Upon the farthest earth removed from thee ;
 For nimble thought can jump both sea and land,
 As soon as think the place where he would be.
 But, ah ! thought kills me, that I am not thought,
 To leap large lengths of miles when thou art gone ;
 But that, so much of earth and water wrought,¹
 I must attend time's leisure with my moan ;
 Receiving naught, by elements so slow,
 But heavy tears, badges of either's woe :

¹ i. e. being so thoroughly compounded of these two poisonous elements

XLV.

The other two, slight air and purging fire,
Are both with thee, wherever I abide;
The first my thought, the other my desire;
These present-absent with swift motion slide:
For when these quicker elements are gone
In tender embassy of love to thee,
My life, being made of four, with two alone
Sinks down to death, oppress'd with melancholy;
Until life's composition be recured
By those swift messengers return'd from thee,
Who even but now come back again, assured
Of thy fair health, recounting it to me:
This told, I joy; but then no longer glad,
I send them back again, and straight grow sad.

XLVI.

Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war,
How to divide the conquest of thy sight;
Mine eye my heart thy picture's sight would bar,
My heart mine eye the freedom of that right.
My heart doth plead, that thou in him dost lie,
A closet never pierced with crystal eyes;
But the defendant doth that plea deny.
And says in him thy fair appearance lies.
To 'cide this title is impannelled
A quest of thoughts, all tenants to the heart;
And by their verdict is determined
The clear eye's moiety, and the dear heart's part:

As thus ;—Mine eye's due is thine outward part,
And my heart's right thine inward love of heart.

XLVII.

Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is took.
And each doth good turns now unto the other :
When that mine eye is famish'd for a look,
Or heart in love with sighs himself doth smother,
With my love's picture then my eye doth feast,
And to the painted banquet bids my heart :
Another time mine eye is my heart's guest,
And in his thoughts of love doth share a part :
So, either by thy picture or my love,
Thyself away art present still with me ;
For thou not farther than my thoughts canst
move,
And I am still with them, and they with thee ;
Or, if they sleep, thy picture in my sight
Awakes my heart to heart's and eye's delight.

XLVIII.

How careful was I, when I took my way,
Each trifle under truest bars to thrust,
That, to my use, it might unused stay
From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust !
But thou, to whom my jewels trifles are,
Most worthy comfort, now my greatest grief ;
Thou, best of dearest, and mine only care,
Art left the prey of every vulgar thief.

Thee have I not lock'd up in any chest.
 Save where thou art not, though I feel thou art,
 Within the gentle closure of my breast,
 From whence at pleasure thou mayst come and
 part;

And even thence thou wilt be stolen I fear,
 For truth proves thievish for a prize so dear.

XLIX.

Against that time, if ever that time come,
 When I shall see thee frown on my defects,
 Whenas thy love hath cast his utmost sum,
 Call'd to that audit by advised respects;—
 Against that time, when thou shalt strangely pass,
 And scarcely greet me with that sun, thine eye;—
 When love, converted from the thing it was,
 Shall reasons find of settled gravity;—
 Against that time do I ensconce¹ me here
 Within the knowlege of mine own desert,
 And this my hand against myself uprear,
 To guard the lawful reasons on thy part:
 To leave poor me thou hast the strength of iawe,
 Since, why to love, I can allege no cause.

L.

How heavy do I journey on the way,
 When what I seek,—my weary travels' end,—

¹ Fortify.

Doth teach that ease and that repose to say,
'Thus far the miles are measured from thy friend !'
'The beast that bears me, tired with my woe,
Plods dully on, to bear that weight in me ;
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider loved not speed, being made from thee :
The bloody spur cannot provoke him on,
That sometimes anger thrusts into his hide,
Which heavily he answers with a groan,
More sharp to me than spurring to his side ;
For that same groan doth put this in my mind :—
My grief lies onward, and my joy behind.

LI.

Thus can my love excuse the slow offence
Of my dull bearer, when from thee I speed :
From where thou art why should I haste me
thence ?
Till I return, of posting is no need.
O, what excuse will my poor beast then find,
When swift extremity can seem but slow ?
Then should I spur, though mounted on the wind ;
In winged speed no motion shall I know :
Then can no horse with my desire keep pace ;
Therefore desire, of perfect love being made,
Shall neigh (no dull flesh) in his fiery race ;
But love, for love, thus shall excuse my jade :—
Since from thee going he went wilful slow,
Towards thee I'll run, and give him leave to go.

LII.

So am I as the rich, whose blessed key
 Can bring him to his sweet uplocked treasure,
 The which he will not every hour survey,
 For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure.
 Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,
 Since seldom coming, in the long year set ;
 Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
 Or captain ¹ jewels in the carcanet.²
 So is the time that keeps you, as my chest,
 Or as the wardrobe which the robe doth hide,
 To make some special instant special-bless'd,
 By new unfolding his imprison'd pride.
 Blessed are you, whose worthiness gives scope ;
 Being had, to triumph ; being lack'd, to hope.

LIII.

What is your substance, whereof are you made,
 That millions of strange shadows on you tend ?
 Since every one hath, every one, one shade ;
 And you, but one, can every shadow lend.
 Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit ³
 Is poorly imitated after you ;
 On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,
 And you in Grecian tires are painted new :

¹ Chief, most valuable.

² Necklace.

³ Portrait

Come daily to the banks, that, when they see
Return of love, more bless'd may be the view.
Or call it winter, which, being full of care,
Makes summer's welcome thrice more wish'd,
more rare.

LVII.

Being your slave, what should I do but tend
Upon the hours and times of your desire?
I have no precious time at all to spend,
Nor services to do, till you require:
Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour,¹
Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for you;
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour,
When you have bid your servant once adieu;
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose;
But, like a sad slave, stay and think of naught,
Save, where you are, how happy you make those:
So true a fool is love, that in your will,
Though you do any thing, he thinks no ill.

LVIII.

That God forbid, that made me first your slave,
I should in thought control your times of pleasure;

¹ i. e. the tedious hour that seems as if it never would end.

Or at your hand the account of hours to crave.
Being your vassal, bound to stay your leisure !
O, let me suffer, being at your beck.
The imprison'd absence of your liberty ;
And patience, tame to sufferance, bide each check,
Without accusing you of injury.
Be where you list ; your charter is so strong,
'That you yourself may privilege your time :
Do what you will, to you it doth belong
Yourself to pardon of self-doing crime.
I am to wait, though waiting so be hell ;
Not blame your pleasure, be it ill or well.

LIX.

If there be nothing new, but that, which is,
Hath been before, how are our brains beguiled,
Which, laboring for invention, bear amiss
The second burthen of a former child ?
O, that record could with a backward look,
Even of five hundred courses of the sun,
Show me your image in some antique book,
Since mind at first in character was done !
That I might see what the old world could say
To this composed wonder of your frame ;
Whether we are mended, or whe'r better they,
Or whether revolution be the same.
O ! sure I am. the wits of former days
To subjects worse have given admiring praise.

LX.

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end ;
Each changing place with that which goes before ;
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main¹ of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight ;
And time that gave, doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the florish set on youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow ;
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow :
And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand,
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

LXI.

Is it thy will, thy image should keep open
My heavy eyelids to the weary night ?
Dost thou desire my slumbers should be broken,
While shadows, like to thee, do mock my sight ?
Is it thy spirit that thou send'st from thee
So far from home, into my deeds to pry ;
To find out shames and idle hours in me,
The scope and tenor of thy jealousy ?

¹ In the great body.

O no: thy love, though much, is not so great;
It is my love that keeps mine eye awake:
Mine own true love that doth my rest defeat.
To play the watchman ever for thy sake:
For thee watch I, whilst thou dost wake else-
where,
From me far off, with others all-too-near.

LXII.

Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye,
And all my soul, and all my every part;
And for this sin there is no remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Methinks no face so gracious¹ is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account;
And for myself mine own worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glass shows me myself indeed,
Beated and chopp'd with tann'd antiquity,
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read;
Self so self-loving were iniquity.
'Tis thee (myself) that for myself I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.

LXIII.

Against my love shall be, as I am now.
With time's injurious hand crush'd and o'erworn:

¹ Beautiful.

When hours have drain'd his blood, and fill'd his
brow

With lines and wrinkles; when his youthful morn
Hath travell'd on to age's steepy night;
And all those beauties, whereof now he's king,
Are vanishing or vanish'd out of sight,
Stealing away the treasure of his spring;—
For such a time do I now fortify
Against confounding age's cruel knife,
That he shall never cut from memory
My sweet love's beauty, though my lover's life.

His beauty shall in these black lines be seen;
And they shall live, and he in them still green.

LXIV.

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich-proud cost of outworn buried age;
When sometime lofty towers I see down-rased,
And brass eternal, slave to mortal rage;—
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss, and loss with store;—
When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself confounded to decay;—
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminat;—
That time will come, and take my love away.
This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

LXV.

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless
sea,

But sad mortality o'ersways their power :
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger than a flower ?
O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor gates of steel so strong, but time decays ?
O fearful meditation ! where, alack !
Shall time's best jewel from time's chest lie hid ?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot
back ?

Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid ?

O, none ; unless this miracle have might ;—

That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

LXVI.

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry ;—
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honor shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly (doctor-like) controlling skill,

And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
 And captive good attending captain ill :
 Tired with all these, from these would I be
 gone,
 Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

LXVII.

Ah ! wherefore with infection should he live,
 And with his presence grace impiety,
 That sin by him advantage should achieve,
 And lace¹ itself with his society ?
 Why should false painting imitate his cheek,
 And steal dead seeing of his living hue ?
 Why should poor beauty indirectly seek
 Roses of shadow, since his rose is true ?
 Why should he live, now Nature bankrupt is,
 Beggar'd of blood to blush through lively veins ?
 For she hath no exchequer now but his ;
 And, proud of many, lives upon his gains.
 O, him she stores, to show what wealth she had,
 In days long since, before these last so bad.

LXVIII.

Thus is his cheek the map of days outworn,
 When beauty lived and died, as flowers do now.
 Before these bastard signs of fair were borne,
 Or durst inhabit on a living brow ;

¹ Embellish.

Before the golden tresses of the dead,
 The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,
 To live a second life on second head,
 Ere beauty's dead fleece made another gay :
 In him those holy antique hours are seen,
 Without all ornament, itself, and true,
 Making no summer of another's green,
 Robbing no old to dress his beauty new ;
 And him as for a map doth nature store,
 To show false art what beauty was of yore.

LXIX.

Those parts of thee that the world's eye doth view,
 Want nothing that the thought of hearts can
 mend :
 All tongues (the voice of souls) give thee that due,
 Uttering bare truth, even so as foes commend.
 Thine outward thus with outward praise is crown'd
 But those same tongues that give thee so thine own
 In other accents do this praise confound,
 By seeing farther than the eye hath shown.
 They look into the beauty of thy mind,
 And that, in guess, they measure by thy deeds ;
 Then (churls) their thoughts, although their eyes
 were kind,
 To thy fair flower add the rank smell of weeds :
 But why thy odor matcheth not thy show,
 The solve ¹ is this ;—that thou dost common grow

¹ Solution.

LXX.

That thou art blamed shall not be thy defect,
 For slander's mark was ever yet the fair;
 'The ornament of beauty is suspect,¹
 A crow that flies in heaven's sweetest air.
 So thou be good, slander doth but approve
 Thy worth the greater, being woo'd of time;
 For canker vice the sweetest buds doth love,
 And thou present'st a pure, unstained prime.
 Thou hast pass'd by the ambush of young days,
 Either not assail'd, or victor being charged;
 Yet this thy praise cannot be so thy praise,
 'To tie up envy, evermore enlarged:
 If some suspect of ill mask'd not thy show,
 'Then thou alone kingdoms of hearts shouldst
 owe.²

LXXI.

No longer mourn for me when I am dead,
 Than you shall hear the surly, sullen bell
 Give warning to the world that I am fled
 From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
 Nay, if you read this line, remember not
 The hand that writ it; for I love you so,
 That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
 If thinking on me then should make you woe.

¹ Suspicion.

² Own, possess.

O, if (I say) you look upon this verse,
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse;
But let your love even with my life decay.
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

LXXII.

O, lest the world should task you to recite
What merit lived in me, that you should love
After my death,—dear love, forget me quite,
For you in me can nothing worthy prove;
Unless you would devise some virtuous lie,
To do more for me than mine own desert,
And hang more praise upon deceased I
Than niggard truth would willingly impart.
O, lest your true love may seem false in this,
That you for love speak well of me untrue,
My name be buried where my body is,
And live no more to shame nor me nor you:
For I am shamed by that which I bring forth;
And so should you, to love things nothing worth.

LXXIII.

That time of year thou mayst in me behold,
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold;
Bare, ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds
sang.

In me thou seest the twilight of such day,
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away ;
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou seest the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie ;
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was norish'd by.

 This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more
 strong,

 To love that well which thou must leave ere
 long.

LXXIV.

But be contented : when that fell arrest
Without all bail shall carry me away,
My life hath in this line some interest,
Which for memorial still with thee shall stay.
When thou reviewest this, thou dost review
The very part was consecrate to thee.
The earth can have but earth, which is his due ;
My spirit is thine, the better part of me :
So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,
The prey of worms, my body being dead ;
The coward conquest of a wretch's knife,
Too base of thee to be remembered.

 The worth of that, is that which it contains ;
 And that is this, and this with thee remains.

LXXV.

So are you to my thoughts, as food to life,
 Or as sweet-season'd showers are to the ground;
 And for the peace of you I hold such strife
 As twixt a miser and his wealth is found:
 Now proud as an enjoyer, and anon
 Doubting the filching age will steal his treasure:
 Now counting best to be with you alone,
 Then better'd that the world may see my pleasure:
 Sometime, all full with feasting on your sight,
 And by and by clean starved for a look;
 Possessing or pursuing no delight,
 Save what is had or must from you be took.
 'Thus do I pine and surfeit day by day,
 Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

LXXVI.

Why is my verse so barren of new pride?
 So far from variation or quick change?
 Why, with the time, do I not glance aside
 To new-found methods and to compounds strange?
 Why write I still all one, ever the same,
 And keep invention in a noted weed,
 That every word doth almost tell my name,
 Showing their birth, and where they did proceed?
 O, know, sweet love, I always write of you,
 And you and love are still my argument;
 So all my best is dressing old words new,
 Spending again what is already spent:

For as the sun is daily new and old.
So is my love still telling what is told.

LXXVII.

Thy glass will show thee how thy beauties wear,
Thy dial how thy precious minutes waste;
The vacant leaves thy mind's imprint will bear,
And of this book¹ this learning mayst thou taste.
The wrinkles which thy glass will truly show,
Of mouthed graves will give thee memory;
Thou by thy dial's shady stealth mayst know
Time's thievish progress to eternity.
Look, what thy memory cannot contain,
Commit to these waste blanks; and thou shalt find
Those children nursed, deliver'd from thy brain,
To take a new acquaintance of thy mind.
These offices, so oft as thou wilt look,
Shall profit thee, and much enrich thy book.

LXXVIII.

So oft have I invoked thee for my Muse,
And found such fair assistance in my verse,
As every alien pen hath got my use,
And under thee their poesy disperse.

observes that this sonnet was probably designed
a present of a book consisting of blank paper;
adds, that we learn from Sonnet cxxii. that
received a table-book from his friend.

Thine eyes, that taught the dumb on high to sing,
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
Have added feathers to the learned's wing,
And given grace a double majesty.
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
Whose influence is thine, and born of thee :
In others' works thou dost but mend the style,
And arts with thy sweet graces graced be :
But thou art all my art, and dost advance
As high as learning my rude ignorance.

LXXIX.

Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid,
My verse alone had all thy gentle grace ;
But now my gracious numbers are decay'd,
And my sick Muse doth give another place.
I grant, sweet love, thy lovely argument
Deserves the travail of a worthier pen ;
Yet what of thee thy poet doth invent,
He robs thee of, and pays it thee again.
He lends thee virtue, and he stole that word
From thy behavior ; beauty doth he give,
And found it in thy cheek ; he can afford
No praise to thee but what in thee doth live.
Then thank him not for that which he doth
say,
Since what he owes thee thou thyself dost pay.

LXXX.

O, how I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better spirit¹ doth use your name.
And in the praise thereof spends all his might,
To make me tongue-tied, speaking of your fame!
But since your worth, wide as the ocean is,
The humble as the proudest sail doth bear,
My saucy bark, inferior far to his,
On your broad main doth wilfully appear.
Your shallowest help will hold me up afloat,
Whilst he upon your soundless deep doth ride;
Or, being wreck'd, I am a worthless boat;
He of tall building, and of goodly pride:
Then if he thrive, and I be cast away,
The worst was this;—my love was my decay.

LXXXI.

Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
Or you survive when I in earth am rotten;
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortal life shall have.
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die.
'The earth can yield me but a common grave,
When you entombed in men's eyes shall lie.

¹ Malone conjectures that Spenser is here meant.

Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read ;
And tongues to be, your being shall rehearse,
When all the breathers of this world are dead ;
You still shall live (such virtue hath my pen)
Where breath most breathes,—even in the mouths
of men.

LXXXII.

I grant, thou wert not married to my Muse,
And therefore mayst without attaint o'erlook
The dedicated words which writers use
Of their fair subject, blessing every book.
Thou art as fair in knowlege as in hue,
Finding thy worth a limit past my praise ;
And therefore art enforced to seek anew
Some fresher stamp of the time-bettering days.
And do so, love.; yet when they have devised
What strained touches rhetoric can lend,
Thou truly fair wert truly sympathised
In true plain words, by thy true-telling friend ;
And their gross painting might be better used
Where cheeks need blood ; in thee it is abused.

LXXXIII.

I never saw that you did painting need,
And therefore to your fair¹ no painting set.

¹ Beauty.

I found, or thought I found, you did exceed
The barren tender of a poet's debt :
And therefore have I slept in your report,
That you yourself, being extant, well might show
How far a modern ¹ quill doth come too short,
Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow.
This silence for my sin you did impute,
Which shall be most my glory, being dumb ;
For I impair not beauty being mute,
When others would give life, and bring a tomb.
There lives more life in one of your fair eyes
Than both your poets can in praise devise.

LXXXIV.

Who is it that says most ? which can say more,
Than this rich praise ;—that you alone are you ?
In whose confine immured is the store,
Which should example where your equal grew.
Lean penury within that pen doth dwell,
That to his subject lends not some small glory ;
But he that writes of you, if he can tell
That you are you, so dignifies his story,
Let him but copy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what nature made so clear,
And such a counterpart shall fame his wit,
Making his style admired every where.

¹ Common, trite

You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,
Being fond on praise, which makes your praises
worse.

LXXXV.

My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your praise, richly compiled.
Reserve¹ their character with golden quill,
And precious phrase by all the Muses filed.
I think good thoughts, while others write good
words ;

And, like unletter'd clerk, still cry Amen
To every hymn that able spirit affords,
In polish'd form of well-refined pen.
Hearing you praised, I say,—' 'Tis so.' ' 'Tis true,'
And to the most of praise add something more ;
But that it is in my thought, whose love to you,
Though words come hindmost, holds his rank
before.

Then others for the breath of words respect ;
Me for my dumb thoughts, speaking in effect.

LXXXVI.

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of all-too-precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew ?

¹ i. e. preserve.

Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write
 Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
 No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
 Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
 He, nor that affable familiar ghost,
 Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
 As victors, of my silence cannot boast:
 I was not sick of any fear from thence.
 But when your countenance filed¹ up his line,
 Then lack'd I matter; that enfeebled mine.

LXXXVII.

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,
 And like enough thou know'st thy estimate:
 The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;
 My bonds in thee are all determinate.²
 For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?
 And for that riches where is my deserving?
 The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
 And so my patent back again is swerving.
 Thyself thou gavest, thy own worth then not
 knowing,
 Or me, to whom thou gavest it, else mistaking;
 So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
 Comes home again, on better judgment making.
 Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter;
 In sleep, a king; but waking, no such matter.

¹ Polished.

² Faded, out of date.

LXXXVIII.

When thou shalt be disposed to set me light,
And place my merit in the eye of scorn,
Upon thy side against myself I'll fight,
And prove thee virtuous, though thou art forsworn.
With mine own weakness being best acquainted,
Upon thy part I can set down a story
Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted ;
That thou, in losing me, shalt win much glory :
And I by this will be a gainer too ;
For bending all my loving thoughts on thee,
The injuries that to myself I do,
Doing thee vantage, double-vantage me.

Such is my love, to thee I so belong,
That for thy right myself will bear all wrong.

LXXXIX.

Say that thou didst forsake me for some fault,
And I will comment upon that offence :
Speak of my lameness, and I straight will halt :
Against thy reasons making no defence.
'Thou canst not, love, disgrace me half so ill,
'To set a form upon desired change,
As I'll myself disgrace : knowing thy will,
I will acquaintance strangle, and look strange ;
Be absent from thy walks ; and in my tongue
Thy sweet-beloved name no more shall dwell ;
Lest I, too much profane, should do it wrong,
And haply of our old acquaintance tell.

For thee, against myself I'll vow debate :
For I must ne'er love him whom thou dost
hate.

XC.

Then hate me when thou wilt ; if ever, now ;
Now, while the world is bent my deeds to cross,
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,
And do not drop in for an after-loss :
Ah ! do not, when my heart hath escaped this
sorrow,
Come in the rearward of a conquer'd woe ;
Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,
To linger out a purposed overthrow.
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,
When other petty griefs have done their spite ;
But in the onset come : so shall I taste
At first the very worst of fortune's might ;
And other strains of, woe, which now seem
woe,
Compared with loss of thee, will not seem so.

XCI.

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,
Some in their wealth, some in their body's force ;
Some in their garments, though new-fangled ill ;
Some in their hawks and hounds, some in their
horse ;
And every humor hath his adjunct pleasure,
Wherein it finds a joy above the rest :

But these particulars are not my measure ;
All these I better in one general best.
Thy iove is better than high birth to me,
Richer than wealth, prouder than garments' cost,
Of more delight than hawks or horses be ;
And having thee, of all men's pride I boast :
 Wretched in this alone, that thou mayst take
 All this away, and me most wretched make.

XCII.

But do thy worst to steal thyself away,
For term of life thou art assured mine ;
And life no longer than thy love will stay,
For it depends upon that love of thine.
Then need I not to fear the worst of wrongs,
When in the least of them my life hath end :
I see a better state to me belongs
Than that which on thy humor doth depend.
Thou canst not vex me with inconstant mind,
Since that my life on thy revolt doth lie.
O, what a happy title do I find,
Happy to have thy love, happy to die !
 But what's so blessed-fair that fears no blot ?—
 Thou mayst be false, and yet I know it not :

XCIII.

So shall I live, supposing thou art true.
Like a deceived husband ; so love's face

May still seem love to me, though alter'd-new;
Thy looks with me, thy heart in other place:
For there can live no hatred in thine eye,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy change.
In many's looks the false heart's history
Is writ, in moods, and frowns, and wrinkles strange:
But Heaven in thy creation did decree,
'That in thy face sweet love should ever dwell;
Whate'er thy thoughts or thy heart's workings be,
Thy looks should nothing thence but sweetness tell.
How like Eve's apple doth thy beauty grow,
If thy sweet virtue answer not thy show!

XCIV.

They that have power to hurt, and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show;
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow;—
They rightly do inherit Heaven's graces,
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others but stewards of their excellence.
'The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die;
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

XCV.

How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame,
Which, like a canker in the fragrant rose,
Doth stop the beauty of thy budding name !
O, in what sweets dost thou thy sins enclose !
That tongue, that tells the story of thy days,
Making lascivious comments on thy sport,
Cannot dispraise but in a kind of praise :
Naming thy name blesses an ill report.
O, what a mansion have those vices got,
Which for their habitation chose out thee ;
Where beauty's veil doth cover every blot ;
And all things turn to fair, that eyes can see !
Take heed, dear heart, of this large privilege :
The hardest knife ill-used doth lose his edge.

XCVI.

Some say, thy fault is youth, some wantonness ;
Some say, thy grace is youth and gentle sport ;
Both grace and faults are loved of more and less :
Thou makest faults graces that to thee resort.
As on the finger of a throned queen
The basest jewel will be well esteem'd ;
So are those errors that in thee are seen,
To truths translated, and for true things deem'd.
How many lambs might the stern wolf betray,
If like a lamb he could his looks translate !
How many gazers mightst thou lead away,
If thou wouldst use the strength of all thy state !

But do not so : I love thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

XCVII.

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year !
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen !
What old December's bareness every where !
And yet this time removed ¹ was summer's time ;
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,
Like widow'd wombs after their lords' decease :
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans, and unfather'd fruit ;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee ;
And, thou away, the very birds are mute ;
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer,
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

XCVIII.

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odor and in hue,

i. e. this time in which I was remote or absent from thee.

Could make me any summer's story tell.
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they
grew :
Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose ;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you ; you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still ; and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play :

XCIX.

The forward violet thus did I chide ;—
' Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that
smells,
If not from my love's breath ? The purple pride,
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells,
In my love's veins thou hast too grossly died.'
The lily I condemned for thy hand,
And buds of marjoram had stolen thy hair :
The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,
One blushing shame, another white despair :
A third, nor red nor white, had stolen of both,
And to his robbery had annex'd thy breath ;
But for his theft, in pride of all his growth,
A vengeful canker eat him up to death.
More flowers I noted ; yet I none could see
But sweet or color it had stolen from the .

C.

Where art thou, Muse, that thou forget'st so long
To speak of that which gives thee all thy might ?
Spend'st thou thy fury on some worthless song,
Darkening thy power, to lend base subjects light ?
Return, forgetful Muse, and straight redeem
In gentle numbers time so idly spent ;
Sing to the ear that doth thy lays esteem,
And gives thy pen both skill and argument.
Rise, restiff Muse ; my love's sweet face survey,
If Time have any wrinkle graven there ;
If any, be a satire to decay,
And make Time's spoils despised every where.
Give my love fame faster than Time wastes life ;
So thou prevent'st his scythe and crooked knife.

CI.

O truant Muse, what shall be thy amends,
For thy neglect of truth in beauty died ?
Both truth and beauty on my love depends ;
So dost thou too, and therein dignified.
Make answer, Muse ; wilt thou not haply say ;—
' Truth needs no color, with his color fix'd ;
Beauty no pencil, beauty's truth to lay ;
But best is best, if never intermix'd ?'
Because he needs no praise, wilt thou be dumb ?
Excuse not silence so ; for it lies in thee
To make him much outlive a gilded tomb,
And to be praised of ages yet to be.

Then do thy office, Muse ; I teach thee how
To make him seem long hence as he snows now

CII.

My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in
seeming ;
I love not less, though less the show appear ;
That love is merchandised, whose rich esteeming
The owner's tongue doth publish every where.
Our love was new, and then but in the spring,
When I was wont to greet it with my lays ;
As Philomel in summer's front doth sing,
And stops his pipe in growth of riper days :
Not that the summer is less pleasant now
Than when her mournful hymns did hush the night :
But that wild music burdens every bough,
And sweets grown common lose their dear delight :
Therefore, like her, I sometime hold my tongue,
Because I would not dull you with my song.

CIII.

Alack ! what poverty my Muse brings forth ;
That, having such a scope to show her pride,
The argument, all bare, is of more worth,
Than when it hath my added praise beside.
O, blame me not, if I no more can write !
Look in your glass, and there appears a face
That overgoes my blunt invention quite,
Dulling my lines, and doing me disgrace.

Were it not sinful then, striving to mend,
To mar the subject that before was well?
For to no other pass my verses tend,
Than of your graces and your gifts to tell;
And more, much more, than in my verse can sit,
Your own glass shows you, when you look in it.

CIV.

To me, fair friend, you never can be old;
For as you were, when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride:
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd,
In process of the seasons have I seen;
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah! yet doth beauty, like a dial hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth
stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived:
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred:—
Ere you were born, was beauty's summer dead.

CV.

Let not my love be call'd idolatry,
Nor my beloved as an idol show,
Since all alike my songs and praises be,
To one, of one, still such, and ever so.

Kind is my love to-day, to-morrow kind,
Still constant in a wondrous excellence ;
Therefore my verse, to constancy confined,
One thing expressing, leaves out difference.
Fair, kind, and true, is all my argument ;
Fair, kind, and true, varying to other words :
And in this change is my invention spent ;
Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords.
Fair, kind, and true have often lived alone ;
Which three, till now, never kept seat in one.

CVI.

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights ;
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme,
In praise of ladies dead, and lovely knights ;—
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have express'd
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring ;
And, for they look'd but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing :
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to
praise.

CVII.

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
 Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,
 Can yet the lease of my true love control,
 Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.
 The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,
 And the sad augurs mock their own presage;
 Incertainties now crown themselves assured,
 And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
 Now with the drops of this most balmy time
 My love looks fresh, and death to me subscribes;¹
 Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,
 While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes:
 And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
 When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are
 spent.

CVIII.

What's in the brain that ink may character,
 Which hath not figured to thee my true spirit?
 What's new to speak, what new to register,
 That may express my love, or thy dear merit?
 Nothing, sweet boy; but yet, like prayers divine,
 I must each day say o'er the very same;
 Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
 Even as when first I hallow'd thy fair name.

¹ Obeys, submits.

So that eternal love, in love's fresh case,
Weighs not the dust and injury of age,
Nor gives to necessary wrinkles place ;
But makes antiquity for aye his page ;
 Finding the first conceit of love there bred,
 Where time and outward form would show it
 dead.

CIX.

O, never say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify !
As easy might I from myself depart,
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie.
That is my home of love : if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, I return again ;
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged ;
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reign'd
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stain'd,
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good ;
 For nothing this wide universe I call,
 Save thou, my rose ; in it thou art my all.

CX.

Alas, 'tis true, I have gone here and thero,
And made myself a motley to the view ;¹

¹ i. e. seemed like a fool ; whose dress used to be motley.

CXIII.

Since I left you, mine eye is in my mind ;
 And that which governs me to go about,
 Doth part his function, and is partly blind ;
 Seems seeing, but effectually is out ;
 For it no form delivers to the heart
 Of bird, of flower, or shape, which it doth latch ;¹
 Of his quick objects hath the mind no part,
 Nor his own vision holds what it doth catch :
 For if it see the rudest or gentlest sight,
 The most sweet favor,² or deformed'st creature,
 The mountain or the sea, the day or night,
 The crow or dove, it shapes them to your feature.
 Incapable of more, replete with you,
 My most true mind thus maketh mine untrue.³

CXIV.

Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you,
 Drink up the monarch's plague, this flattery ;
 Or whether shall I say, mine eye saith true,
 And that your love taught it this alchymy,
 To make, of monsters and things indigest,
 Such cherubins as your sweet self resemble :

¹ Lay hold of.

² Countenance.

³ ' The word untrue is here used as a substantive. The sincerity of my affection is the cause of my untruth ; i. e. of my not seeing objects truly, such as they appear to the rest of mankind. — Malone.

Creating every bad a perfect best,
 As fast as objects to his beams assemble?
 O, 'tis the first; 'tis flattery in my seeing,
 And my great mind most kingly drinks it up:
 Mine eye well knows what with his gust is 'greeing,
 And to his palate doth prepare the cup:
 If it be poison'd, 'tis the lesser sin,
 That mine eye loves it, and doth first begin.

CXV.

Those lines that I before have writ, do lie,
 Even those that said I could not love you dearer;
 Yet then my judgment knew no reason why
 My most full flame should afterwards burn clearer:
 But reckoning time, whose million'd accidents
 Creep in 'twixt vows, and change decrees of kings,
 Tan sacred beauty, blunt the sharp'st intents,
 Divert strong minds to the course of altering
 things;—
 Alas! why, fearing of time's tyranny,
 Might I not then say,—' Now I love you best,'
 When I was certain o'er incertainty,
 Crowning the present, doubting of the rest?
 Love is a babe; then might I not say so,
 To give full growth to that which still doth
 grow?

CXVI.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
 Admit impediments. Love is not love,

Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove :
O, no ; it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken ;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth 's unknown, although his height be
taken.

Love 's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come,
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.

If this be error, and upon me proved ;—
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

CXVII.

Accuse me thus ; that I have scanted all,
Wherein I should your great deserts repay ;
Forgot upon your dearest love to call,
Whereto all bonds do tie me day by day ;
That I have frequent been with unknown minds,
And given to time your own dear-purchased right ;
That I have hoisted sail to all the winds,
Which should transport me farthest from your
sight.

Book both my wilfulness and errors down ;
And, on just proof, surmise accumulate ;
Bring me within the level of your frown.
But shoot not at me in your waken'd hate :
Since my appeal says, I did strive to prove
The constancy and virtue of your love.

CXVIII.

Like as, to make our appetites more keen,
 With eager¹ compounds we our palate urge;
 As, to prevent our maladies unseen,
 We sicken to shun sickness, when we purge:—
 Even so, being full of your ne'er-cloying sweetness,
 To bitter sauces did I frame my feeding;
 And, sick of welfare, found a kind of meetness
 To be diseased, ere that there was true needing.
 Thus policy in love, to anticipate
 The ills that were not, grew to faults assured,
 And brought to medicine a healthful state,
 Which, rank of goodness, would by ill be cured.
 But thence I learn, and find the lesson true,
 Drugs poison him that so fell sick of you.

CXIX.

What potions have I drunk of siren tears,
 Distill'd from limbecks foul as hell within;
 Applying fears to hopes, and hopes to fears;
 Still losing when I saw myself to win!
 What wretched errors hath my heart committed,
 Whilst it hath thought itself so blessed never!
 How have mine eyes out of their spheres been
 fitted,
 In the distraction of this madding fever!²

¹ Sour.

² How have mine eyes been convulsed during the frantic fits of my feverish love?

O benefit of ill ! now I find true,
 That better is by evil still made better ;
 And ruin'd love, when it is built anew,
 Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.
 So I return rebuked to my content,
 And gain by ill thrice more than I have spent.

CXX.

That you were once unkind, befriends me now ;
 And for that sorrow, which I then did feel,
 Needs must I under my transgression bow,
 Unless my nerves were brass or hammer'd steel :
 For if you were by my unkindness shaken,
 As I by yours, you have pass'd a hell of time ;
 And I, a tyrant, have no leisure taken
 To weigh how once I suffer'd in your crime.
 O, that our night of woe might have remember'd¹
 My deepest sense, how hard true sorrow hits ;
 And soon to you, as you to me, then tender'd
 The humble salve which wounded bosoms fits !
 But that your trespass now becomes a fee ;
 Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransom me.

CXXI.

'Tis better to be vile, than vile esteem'd,
 When not to be receives reproach of being ;

¹ Reminded.

And the just pleasure lost, which is so deem'd,
 Not by our feeling, but by others' seeing.
 For why should others' false, adulterate eyes
 Give salutation to my sportive blood?
 Or on my frailties why are frailer spies,
 Which in their wills count bad what I think good?
 No; I am that I am; and they that level
 At my abuses, reckon up their own:
 I may be straight, though they themselves be
 bevel;¹
 By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be
 shown:
 Unless this general evil they maintain;—
 All men are bad, and in their badness reign.

CXXII.

Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain
 Full character'd with lasting memory,
 Which shall above that idle rank remain,
 Beyond all date, even to eternity:
 Or, at the least, so long as brain and heart
 Have faculty by nature to subsist;
 Till each to rased oblivion yield his part
 Of thee, thy record never can be miss'd.
 That poor retention could not so much hold,²
 Nor need I tallies, thy dear love to score:

¹ Crooked.

² 'That poor retention' is the table-book given to him by his friend, incapable of retaining, or rather of containing, so much as the tablet of the brain.'—Malone.

Therefore to give them from me was I bold,
To trust those tables that receive thee more.
To keep an adjunct to remember thee,
Were to import forgetfulness in me.

CXXIII.

No; Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change :
Thy pyramids, built up with newer might,
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange ;
They are but dressings of a former sight.
Our dates are brief, and therefore we admire
What thou dost foist upon us that is old ;
And rather make them born to our desire,
Than think that we before have heard them told.
Thy registers and thee I both defy,
Not wondering at the present nor the past ;
For thy records and what we see do lie,
Made more or less by thy continual haste :
This I do vow, and this shall ever be ;
I will be true, despite thy scythe and thee.

CXXIV.

If my dear love were but the child of state,
It might for fortune's bastard be unfather'd,
As subject to time's love or to time's hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers ga-
ther'd.
No, it was builded far from accident ;
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls

Under the blow of thrall'd discontent.
Whereto the inviting time our fashion calls :
It fears not policy, that heretic,
Which works on leases of short-number'd hours ;
But all alone stands hugely politic,
That it nor grows with heat, nor drowns with
showers.

To this I witness call the fools of time,
Which die for goodness, who have lived for
crime.

CXXV.

Were it aught to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honoring,
Or laid great bases for eternity,
Which prove more short than waste or ruining ?
Have I not seen dwellers on form and favor
Lose all, and more, by paying too much rent ;
For compound sweet foregoing simple savor ;
Pitiful thrivers, in their gazing spent ?
No ; let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation, poor but free,
Which is not mix'd with seconds, knows no art,
But mutual render, only me for thee.

Hence, thou suborn'd informer ! a true soul,
When most impeach'd, stands least in thy con-
trol.

CXXVI.

O thou, my lovely boy, who in thy power
Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his sickle, hour;
Who hast by waning grown, and therein show'st
Thy lovers withering, as thy sweet self grow'st!
If nature, sovereign mistress over wrack,
As thou goest onwards, still will pluck thee back,
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill
May time disgrace, and wretched minutes kill.
Yet fear her, O thou minion of her pleasure;
She may detain, but not still keep her treasure:
Her audit, though delay'd, answer'd must be;
And her quietus is to render thee.

CXXVII.

In the old age black was not counted fair,
Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name;
But now is black beauty's successive heir,
And beauty slander'd with a bastard shame:
For since each hand hath put on nature's power,
Fairing the foul with art's false-borrow'd face,
Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy hour,
But is profaned, if not lives in disgrace.
'Therefore my mistress' eyes are raven black,
Her eyes so suited; and they mourners seem
At such, who, not born fair, no beauty lack,
Slandering creation with a false esteem:¹

¹ 'They seem to mourn, that those who are not born fair, are yet possessed of an artificial beauty, by which they pass for what they are not; and thus dishonor nature by their imperfect imitation and false pretensions.'—Malone.

Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,
That every tongue says, beauty should look so.

CXXVIII.

How oft, when thou, my music, music play'st
Upon that blessed wood, whose motion sounds
With thy sweet fingers, when thou gently sway'st
The wiry concord that mine ear confounds,
Do I envy those jacks,¹ that nimble leap
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand;
Whilst my poor lips, which should that harvest
reap,

At the wood's boldness by thee blushing stand!
To be so tickled, they would change their state
And situation with those dancing chips,
O'er whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait,
Making dead wood more bless'd than living lips.
Since saucy jacks so happy are in this,
Give them thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss.

CXXIX.

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
Enjoy'd no sooner, but despised straight;
Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,

¹ A jack is part of a small kind of spinnet, called a virginal.

Past reason hated, as a swallow'd bait,
On purpose laid to make the taker mad :
Mad in pursuit, and in possession so ;
Had, having ; and in quest to have, extreme ;
A bliss in proof ; and, proved, a very woe ;
Before, a joy proposed ; behind, a dream :
 All this the world well knows ; yet none knows
 well
 To shun the heaven that leads men to this
 hell.

CXXX.

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun ;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red :
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun ;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks ;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak ; yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound :
I grant, I never saw a goddess go ;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the
 ground :
 And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
 As any she, belied with false compare.

CXXXI.

Thou art as tyrannous, so as thou art,
As those whose beauties proudly make them cruel;
For well thou know'st, to my dear, doting heart,
Thou art the fairest and most precious jewel.
Yet, in good faith, some say, that thee behold,
Thy face hath not the power to make love groan :
'To say they err, I dare not be so bold,
Although I swear it to myself alone :
And, to be sure that is not false I swear,
A thousand groans, but thinking on thy face,
One on another's neck, do witness bear
Thy black is fairest in my judgment's place.
In nothing art thou black, save in thy deeds,
And thence this slander, as I think, proceeds.

CXXXII.

Thine eyes I love ; and they, as pitying me,
Knowing thy heart, torment me with disdain ;
Have put on black, and loving mourners be,
Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain.
And truly not the morning sun of heaven
Better becomes the gray cheeks of the east,
Nor that full star that ushers in the even,
Doth half that glory to the sober west ; --
As those two mourning eyes become thy face.
O, let it then as well beseem thy heart
To mourn for me, since mourning doth thee grace,
And suit thy pity like in every part.

Then will I swear, beauty herself is black.
And all they foul that thy complexion lack.

CXXXIII.

Beshrew that heart, that makes my heart to groan
For that deep wound it gives my friend and me!
Is't not enough to torture me alone,
But slave to slavery my sweet'st friend must be?
Me from myself thy cruel eye hath taken,
And my next self thou harder hast engross'd:
Of him, myself, and thee, I am forsaken;
A torment thrice threefold thus to be cross'd.
Prison my heart in thy steel bosom's ward,
But then my friend's heart let my poor heart
bail:
Whoe'er keeps me, let my heart be his guard;
Thou canst not then use rigor in my jail:
And yet thou wilt; for I, being pent in thee,
Perforce am thine, and all that is in me.

CXXXIV.

So now I have confess'd that he is thine,
And I myself am mortgaged to thy will;
Myself I'll forfeit, so that other mine
Thou wilt restore, to be my comfort still:
But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free;
For thou art covetous, and he is kind:
He learn'd but, surety-like, to write for me,
Under that bond that him as fast doth bind.

The statute¹ of thy beauty thou wilt take,
 Thou usurer, that put'st forth all to use,
 And sue a friend, came debtor for my sake ;
 So him I lose through my unkind abuse.

Him have I lost ; thou hast both him and me ;
 He pays the whole, and yet am I not free.

CXXXV.

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy will,
 And will to boot, and will in overplus :
 More than enough am I that vex thee still,
 To thy sweet will making addition thus.
 Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
 Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine ?
 Shall will in others seem right gracious,
 And in my will no fair acceptance shine ?
 The sea, all water, yet receives rain still,
 And in abundance addeth to his store ;
 So thou, being rich in will, add to thy will
 One will of mine, to make thy large will more.

Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill ;
 Think all but one, and me in that one Will.

CXXXVI.

If thy soul check thee that I come so near.
 Swear to thy blind soul that I was thy Will,

¹ ' Statute has here its legal signification ; that of a security or obligation for money.'—Malone.

And will, thy soul knows, is admitted there :
 Thus far for love, my love-suit, sweet, fulfil.
 Will will fulfil the treasure of thy love,
 Ay, fill it full with wills, and my will one.
 In things of great receipt with ease we prove,
 Among a number one is reckon'd none.
 'Then in the number let me pass untold,
 Though in thy stores' account I one must be ;
 For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold
 That nothing me, a something sweet to thee :
 Make but my name thy love, and love that still ;
 And then thou lovest me ; for my name is Will.

CXXXVII.

Thou blind fool, Love, what dost thou to mine eyes,
 That they behold, and see not what they see ?
 They know what beauty is, see where it lies ;
 Yet what the best is, take the worst to be.
 If eyes, corrupt by over-partial looks,
 Be anchor'd in the bay where all men ride,
 Why of eyes' falsehood hast thou forged hooks,
 Whereto the judgment of my heart is tied ?
 Why should my heart think that a several plot,¹
 Which my heart knows the wide world's common
 place ?
 Or mine eyes seeing this, say this is not,
 To put fair truth upon so foul a face ?

¹ An enclosed field.

In things right true my heart and eyes have
err'd,
And to this false plague are they now transferr'd.

CXXXVIII.

When my love swears that she is made of truth,
I do believe her, though I know she lies ;
That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtilties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue :
On both sides thus is simple truth suppress'd.
But wherefore says she not, she is unjust ?
And wherefore say not I, that I am old ?
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love loves not to have years told :
Therefore I lie with her, and she with me ;
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.

CXXXIX.

O, call not me to justify the wrong,
That thy unkindness lays upon my heart :
Wound me not with thine eye, but with thy
tongue ;
Use power with power, and slay me not by art.
Tell me, thou lovest elsewhere ; but in my sight,
Dear heart, forbear to glance thine eye aside.

What need'st thou wound with cunning, when thy
might

Is more than my o'erpress'd defence can bide ?
Let me excuse thee : ah ! my love well knows
Her pretty looks have been mine enemies ;
And therefore from my face she turns my foes,
That they elsewhere might dart their injuries.
Yet do not so ; but since I am near slain,
Kill me outright with looks, and rid my pain.

CXL.

Be wise as thou art cruel ; do not press
My tongue-tied patience with too much disdain ;
Lest sorrow lend me words, and words express
The manner of my pity-wanting pain.
If I might teach thee wit, better it were,
Though not to love, yet, love, to tell me so ;
As testy sick men, when their deaths be near,
No news but health from their physicians know :
For, if I should despair, I should grow mad,
And in my madness might speak ill of thee :
Now this ill-wresting world is grown so bad,
Mad slanderers by mad ears believed be.
That I may not be so, nor thou belied,
Bear thine eyes straight, though thy proud heart
go wide.

CXLI.

In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes,
For they in thee a thousand errors note ;
But 'tis my heart that loves what they despise,
Who in despite of view is pleased to dote :
Nor are mine ears with thy tongue's tune de-
lighted ;
Nor tender feeling, to base touches prone,
Nor taste, nor smell, desire to be invited
To any sensual feast with thee alone :
But my five wits, nor my five senses can
Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee,
Who leaves unsway'd the likeness of a man,
Thy proud heart's slave and vassal wretch to be :
Only my plague thus far I count my gain,
That she that makes me sin, awards me pain.

CXLII.

Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate,
Hate of my sin, grounded on sinful loving :
O, but with mine compare thou thine own state,
And thou shalt find it merits not reproving ;
Or if it do, not from those lips of thine,
That have profaned their scarlet ornaments,
And seal'd false bonds of love as oft as mine :
Robb'd others' beds revenues of their rents.
Be it lawful I love thee, as thou lovest those,
Whom thine eyes woo as mine importune thee :

CXLVI.

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
Fool'd by those rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within, and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on
men;
And, death once dead, there's no more dying
then.

CXLVII.

My love is as a fever, longing still
For that which longer nurseth the disease;
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill
The uncertain sickly appetite to please.
My reason, the physician to my love,
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,
Hath left me; and I desperate now approve,
Desire is death, which physic did except.

Past cure I am, now reason is past care,
And frantic-mad with evermore unrest :
My thoughts and my discourse as madmen's are,
At random from the truth vainly express'd :
For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee
bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.

CXLVIII.

O me ! what eyes hath love put in my head,
Which have no correspondence with true sight !
Or, if they have, where is my judgment fled,
That censures¹ falsely what they see aright ?
If that be fair whereon my false eyes dote,
What means the world to say it is not so ?
If it be not, then love doth well denote
Love's eye is not so true as all men's : no,
How can it ? O, how can Love's eye be true,
That is so vex'd with watching and with tears ?
No marvel then though I mistake my view :
The sun itself sees not, till heaven clears.
O cunning Love ! with tears thou keep'st me
blind,
Lest eyes well-seeing thy foul faults should find.

¹ Estimates.

CXLIX.

Canst thou, O cruel! say I love thee not,
 When I, against myself, with thee partake?¹
 Do I not think on thee, when I forgot
 Am of myself, all, tyrant, for thy sake?
 Who hateth thee that I do call my friend?
 On whom frown'st thou that I do fawn upon?
 Nay, if thou lower'st on me, do I not spend
 Revenge upon myself with present moan?
 What merit do I in myself respect,
 That is so proud thy service to despise,
 When all my best doth worship thy defect,
 Commanded by the motion of thine eyes?
 But, love, hate on; for now I know thy mind:
 Those that can see thou lovest, and I am blind.

CL.

O, from what power hast thou this powerful might,
 With insufficiency my heart to sway;
 To make me give the lie to my true sight,
 And swear that brightness doth not grace the day?
 Whence hast thou this becoming of things ill,
 That in the very refuse of thy deeds
 There is such strength and warrantise of skill,
 That, in my mind, thy worst all best exceeds?

¹ Take part.

Who taught thee how to make me love thee more,
The more I hear and see just cause of hate?
O, though I love what others do abhor,
With others thou shouldst not abhor my state :
If thy unworthiness raised love in me,
More worthy I to be beloved of thee.

CLI.

Love is too young to know what conscience is ;
Yet who knows not, conscience is born of love ?
Then, gentle cheater, urge not my amiss,¹
Lest guilty of my faults thy sweet self prove :
For, thou betraying me, I do betray
My nobler part to my gross body's treason ;
My soul doth tell my body that he may
Triumph in love ; flesh stays no farther reason ;
But, rising at thy name, doth point out thee
As his triumphant prize. Proud of this pride,
He is contented thy poor drudge to be,
To stand in thy affairs, fall by thy side.
No want of conscience hold it, that I call
Her love, for whose dear love I rise and fall.

CLII.

In loving thee thou know'st I am forsworn ;
But thou art twice forsworn, to me love swearing ;

¹ Fault

In act thy bed-vow broke, and new faith torn.
In vowing new hate after new love bearing.
But why of two oaths' breach do I accuse thee,
When I break twenty? I am perjured most;
For all my vows are oaths but to misuse thee,
And all my honest faith in thee is lost:
For I have sworn deep oaths of thy deep kindness,
Oaths of thy love, thy truth, thy constancy;
And, to enlighten thee, gave eyes to blindness,
Or made them swear against the thing they see:
For I have sworn thee fair; more perjured I,
To swear, against the truth, so foul a lie!

CLIII.

Cupid laid by his brand, and fell asleep:
A maid of Dian's this advantage found,
And his love-kindling fire did quickly steep
In a cold valley-fountain of that ground;
Which borrow'd from this holy fire of love
A dateless, lively heat, still to endure;
And grew a seething bath, which yet men prove
Against strange maladies a sovereign cure.
But at my mistress' eye love's brand new-fired,
The boy for trial needs would touch my breast:
I sick withal, the help of bath desired,
And thither hied, a sad, distemper'd guest,
But found no cure; the bath for my help lies
Where Cupid got new fire;—my mistress' eyes

CLIV.

The little love-god, lying once asleep,
Laid by his side his heart-inflaming brand,
Whilst many nymphs, that vow'd chaste life to
keep,
Came tripping by; but in her maiden hand
The fairest votary took up that fire,
Which many legions of true hearts had warm'd;
And so the general of hot desire
Was sleeping, by a virgin hand disarm'd.
This brand she quenched in a cool well by,
Which from love's fire took heat perpetual,
Growing a bath and healthful remedy
For men diseased; but I, my mistress' thrall
Came there for cure, and this by that I prove;—
Love's fire heats water, water cools not love.

A LOVER'S COMPLAINT.

A LOVER'S COMPLAINT.

[This beautiful poem was first printed in 1609, with our author's name, at the end of the quarto edition of his Sonnets.]

From off a hill, whose concave womb reworded
A plaintful story from a sistering vale,
My spirits to attend this double voice accorded,
And down I lay to list the sad-tuned tale :
Ere long espied a fickle maid full pale,
'Tearing of papers, breaking rings atwain,
Storming her world with sorrow's wind and rain.

Upon her head a platted hive of straw,
Which fortified her visage from the sun,
Whereon the thought might think sometime it saw
The carcase of a beauty spent and done.
Time had not scythed all that youth begun,
Nor youth all quit; but, spite of heaven's fell rage,
Some beauty peep'd through lattice of sear'd age.

Oft did she heave her napkin to her eyne,
Which on it had conceited characters,¹

¹ Fanciful images.

Laundering¹ the silken figures in the brine
 That season'd woe had pelleted² in tears,
 And often reading what contents it bears;
 As often shrieking undistinguish'd woe,
 In clamors of all size, both high and low.

Sometimes her levell'd eyes their carriage ride,³
 As they did battery to the spheres intend;
 Sometime diverted their poor balls are tied
 To the orb'd earth: sometimes they do extend
 Their view right on; anon their gazes lend
 To every place at once, and no where fix'd,
 The mind and sight distractedly commix'd.

Her hair, nor loose, nor tied in formal plat,
 Proclaim'd in her a careless hand of pride;
 For some, untuck'd, descended her sheaved⁴ hat,
 Hanging her pale and pined cheek beside:
 Some in her threaden fillet still did bide;
 And, true to bondage would not break from thence
 Though slackly braided in loose negligence.

A thousand favors from a maund⁵ she drew,
 Of amber, crystal, and of bedded jet,
 Which one by one she in a river threw,
 Upon whose weeping margent she was set,
 Like usury, applying wet to wet;

¹ Moistening.² i. e. formed into pellets or balls.³ In allusion to a piece of ordnance.⁴ Straw.⁵ Hand basket

Or monarchs' hands, that let not bounty fall
Where want cries some, but where excess begs all.

Of folded schedules had she many a one,
Which she perused, sigh'd, tore, and gave the
flood;

Crack'd many a ring of posied gold and bone,
Bidding them find their sepulchres in mud;
Found yet more letters sadly penn'd in blood,
With sleided¹ silk feat² and affectedly
Enswathed, and seal'd to curious secresy.

These often bathed she in her fluxive eyes,
And often kiss'd, and often 'gan to tear:
Cried,—' O false blood! thou register of lies,
What unapproved witness dost thou bear!
Ink would have seem'd more black and damned
here!'

This said, in top of rage the lines she rents,
Big discontent so breaking their contents.

A reverend man that grazed his cattle nigh,
Sometime a blusterer, that the ruffle knew
Of court, of city, and had let go by
The swiftest hours, observed as they flew;
Towards this afflicted fancy³ fastly drew;
And, privileged by age, desires to know,
In brief, the grounds and motives of her woe.

¹ Raw, untwisted.

² i. e. curiously, nicely.

³ i. e. this afflicted love-sick lady

So slides he down upon his grained bat,¹
And comely-distant sits he by her side ;
When he again desires her, being sat,
Her grievance with his hearing to divide :
If that from him there may be aught applied,
Which may her suffering ecstasy² assuage,
'Tis promised, in the charity of age.

' Father,' she says, ' though in me you behold
The injury of many a blasting hour,
Let it not tell your judgment I am old ;
Not age, but sorrow, over me hath power :
I might as yet have been a spreading flower,
Fresh to myself, if I had self-applied
Love to myself, and to no love beside.

' But, woe is me ! too early I attended
A youthful suit (it was to gain my grace)
Of one by nature's outwards so commended,
'That maidens' eyes stuck over all his face.
Love lack'd a dwelling, and made him her place ;
And when in his fair parts she did abide,
She was new lodged, and newly deified.

' His browny locks did hang in crooked curls -
And every light occasion of the wind
Upon his lips their silken parcels hurls :
What 's sweet to do, to do will aptly find.

¹ Staff.

² Perturbation of mind.

Each eye that saw him did enchant the mind ;
For on his visage was in little drawn,
What largeness thinks in paradise was sawn.¹

‘ Small show of man was yet upon his clin ;
His phoenix down began but to appear,
Like unshorn velvet, on that termless skin,
Whose bare outbragg'd the web it seem'd to wear :
Yet show'd his visage by that cost most dear ;
And nice affections wavering stood in doubt
If best 'twere as it was, or best without.

‘ His qualities were beauteous as his form,
For maiden-tongued he was, and thereof free ;
Yet, if men moved him, was he such a storm,
As oft 'twixt May and April is to see,
When winds breathe sweet, unruly though they be.
His rudeness so with his authorised youth
Did livery falseness in a pride of truth.

‘ Well could he ride, and often men would say,--
‘ That horse his mettle from his rider takes :
Proud of subjection, noble by the sway,
What rounds, what bounds, what course, what stop
 he makes !’

And controversy hence a question takes,
Whether the horse by him became his deed.
Or he his manage by the well-doing steed.

• But quickly on this side the verdict went;
His real habitude gave life and grace
To appertainings and to ornament;
Accomplish'd in himself, not in his case:
All aids, themselves made fairer by their place,
Came for additions; yet their purposed trim
Pieced not his grace, but were all graced by
him.

• So on the tip of his subduing tongue
All kind of arguments and question deep,
All reph'ration prompt, and reason strong,
For his advantage still did wake and sleep:
To make the weeper laugh, the laughter weep,
He had the dialect and different skill,
Catching all passions in his craft of will;

• That he did in the general bosom reign
Of young, of old; and sexes both enchanted,
'To dwell with him in thoughts, or to remain
In personal duty, following where he haunted:
Consents bewitch'd, ere he desire, have granted;
And dialogued for him what he would say,
Ask'd their own wills, and made their wills obey.

• Many there were that did his picture get,
To serve their eyes, and in it put their mind;
Like fools that in the imagination set
The goodly objects which abroad they find
Of lands and mansions, theirs in thought assign'd;

And laboring in more pleasures to bestow them,
Than the true gouty landlord, which doth owe¹
them :

' So many have, that never touch'd his hand,
Sweetly supposed them mistress of his heart :
My woful self, that did in freedom stand,
And was my own fee-simple, not in part ;—
What with his art in youth, and youth in art,
Threw my affections in his charmed power ;
Reserved the stalk, and gave him all my flower.

' Yet did I not, as some my equals did,
Demand of him ; nor, being desired, yielded ;
Finding myself in honor so forbid,
With safest distance I mine honor shielded :
Experience for me many bulwarks builded
Of proofs new-bleeding, which remain'd the foil
Of this false jewel, and his amorous spoil.

' But, ah ! who ever shunn'd by precedent
The destined ill she must herself assay ;
Or forced examples, 'gainst her own content,
To put the by-pass'd perils in her way ?
Counsel may stop awhile what will not stay ;
For when we rage, advice is often seen,
By blunting us, to make our wits more keen.

' Nor gives it satisfaction to our blood,
That we must curb it upon others' proof;
To be forbid the sweets that seem so good,
For fear of harms that preach in our behoof.
O appetite, from judgment stand aloof!
The one a palate hath that needs will taste.
Though reason weep, and cry,—' It is thy last.'

' For farther I could say,—' This man 's untrue;
And knew the patterns of his foul beguiling;¹
Heard where his plants in others' orchards grew;
Saw how deceits were gilded in his smiling;
Knew vows were ever brokers to defiling;
'Thought, characters, and words, merely but art,
And bastards of his foul adulterate heart:

' And long upon these terms I held my city,
Till thus he 'gan besiege me:—' Gentle maid,
Have of my suffering youth some feeling pity,
And be not of my holy vows afraid:
That's to you sworn, to none was ever said;
For feasts of love I have been call'd unto;
Till now did ne'er invite, nor never vow.

' ' All my offences that abroad you see,
Are errors of the blood, none of the mind;
Love made them not; with acture² they may be,

¹ i. e. the examples of his seduction.

² Action.

Where neither party is nor true nor kind :
They sought their shame that so their shame did
find ;

And so much less of shame in me remains,
By how much of me their reproach contains.

‘ ‘ Among the many that mine eyes have seen,
Not one whose flame my heart so much as warm’d,
Or my affection put to the smallest teen,¹
Or any of my leisures ever charm’d :
Harm have I done to them, but ne’er was harm’d ;
Kept hearts in liveries, but mine own was free,
And reign’d, commanding in his monarchy.

‘ ‘ Look here, what tributes wounded fancies² sent
me,
Of paled pearls, and rubies red as blood ;
Figuring that they their passions likewise lent me
Of grief and blushes, aptly understood
In bloodless white and the encrimson’d mood ;
Effects of terror and dear modesty,
Encamp’d in hearts, but fighting outwardly.

‘ ‘ And, lo ! behold these talents of their hair,³
With twisted metal amorously impleach’d,⁴
I have received from many a several fair,

¹ Grief.

² Love-sick maidens.

³ i. e. these lockets, consisting of hair platted and set in gold.

⁴ Interwoven.

(Their kind acceptance weepingly beseech'd)
With the annexions of fair gems enrich'd ;
And deep-brain'd sonnets, that did amplify
Each stone's dear nature, worth, and quality.

' ' The diamond ; why, 'twas beautiful and hard,
Whereto his invised¹ properties did tend ;
The deep-green emerald, in whose fresh regard
Weak sights their sickly radiance do amend ;
The heaven-hued sapphire and the opal blend
With objects manifold : each several stone,
With wit well blazon'd, smiled or made some moan.

' ' Lo ! all these trophies of affections hot,
Of pensived and subdued desires the tender,
Nature hath charged me that I hoard them not,
But yield them up where I myself must render,
That is, to you, my origin and ender :
For these, of force, must your oblations be ;
Since I their altar, you enpatron me.

' ' O, then advance of yours that phraseless hand,
Whose white weighs down the airy scale of praise ;
Take all these similes to your own command,
Hallow'd with sighs that burning lungs did raise ;
What me your minister, for you obeys,
Works under you ; and to your audit comes
Their distract parcels in combined sums.

¹ For invisible.

' Lo! this device was sent me from a nun,
Or sister sanctified, of holiest note ;
Which late her noble suit in court did shun,¹
Whose rarest havings made the blossoms dote ;²
For she was sought by spirits of richest coat,³
But kept cold distance ; and did thence remove,
To spend her living in eternal love.

' ' But, O, my sweet, what labor is 't to leave
The thing we have not, mastering what not strives !
Paling the place which did no form receive,⁴
Playing patient sports in unconstrained gyves.
She that her fame so to herself contrives,
The scars of battle scapeth by the flight ;
And makes her absence valiant, not her might.

' ' O, pardon me, in that my boast is true ;
The accident which brought me to her eye,
Upon the moment did her force subdue,
And now she would the caged cloister fly :
Religious love put out religion's eye.
Not to be tempted, would she be immured ;
And now, to tempt all, liberty procured.

¹ Who lately retired from the solicitation of her noble admirers.

² Whose accomplishments were so extraordinary, that the flower of the young nobility were passionately enamored of her.

³ i. e. coat of arms.

⁴ Securing within the pale of a cloister, that heart which had never received the impression of love.

' ' How mighty then you are, O, hear me tell:
 The broken bosoms that to me belong,
 Have emptied all their fountains in my well,
 And mine I pour your ocean all among:
 I strong o'er them, and you o'er me being strong,
 Must for your victory us all congest,¹
 As compound love to physic your cold breast.

‘ ‘ My parts had power to charm a sacred sun,
Who, disciplined and dieted in grace,
Believed her eyes, when they to assail begun ;
All vows and consecrations giving place.
O most potential love ! vow, bond, nor space,
In thee hath neither sting, knot, nor confine ;
For thou art all, and all things else are thine.

" When thou impressest, what are precepts worth
 Of stale example? When thou wilt inflame,
 How coldly those impediments stand forth
 Of wealth, of filial fear, law, kindred, fame!
 Love's arms are peace, 'gainst rule, 'gainst sense,
 'gainst shame;
 And sweetens,² in the suffering pangs it bears,
 The aloe of all forces, shocks, and fears.

1 Heap together.

* 'The meaning may be—The warfare that love carries on against rule, sense, and shame, produces to the parties engaged a peaceful enjoyment ; and sweetens, &c.'—Malone.

Shook off my sober guards, and civil¹ fears;
Appear to him, as he to me appears.
All melting, though our drops this difference
bore;—
His poison'd me, and mine did him restore.

' In him a plenitude of subtle matter,
Applied to cautels,² all strange forms receives;
Of burning blushes, or of weeping water,
Or swooning paleness; and he takes and leaves,
In either's aptness, as it best deceives,
To blush at speeches rank, to weep at woes,
Or to turn white, and swoon at tragic shows;

' That not a heart, which in his level came,
Could scape the hail of his all-hurting aim,
Showing fair nature is both kind and tame;
And, veil'd in them, did win whom he would main.
Against the thing he sought he would exclaim:
When he most burn'd in heart-wish'd luxury,³
He preach'd pure maid, and praised cold chastity.

' Thus, merely with the garment of a Grace,
The naked and concealed fiend he cover'd,
That the unexperienced gave the tempter place,
Which, like a cherubin, above them hover'd.
Who, young and simple, would not be so lover'd?

¹ Grave, decorous.

² Insidious purposes.

³ Lewdness.

Ah me ! I fell ; and yet do question make
What I should do again for such a sake.

' O, that infected moisture of his eye ;
O, that false fire which in his cheek so glow'd ;
O, that forced thunder from his heart did fly ;
O, that sad breath his spongy lungs bestow'd ;
O, all that borrow'd motion, seeming owed ; ¹—
Would yet again betray the fore-betray'd,
And new pervert a reconciled maid ! '

¹ i. e. that seemed real and his own.

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM.

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM.

[The *Passionate Pilgrim* was first published by William Jaggard in small 8vo. in 1599, with our author's name, in which are inserted a sonnet and ode, which had appeared during the preceding year in a collection of poems written by Richard Barnefield. In the year 1612 the same publisher proceeded still farther; for he then added to the former miscellany a celebrated madrigal of Marlowe, beginning with the words, 'Come, live with me, and be my love,' together with several pieces written by Thomas Heywood, who loudly complained of Jaggard's fraud: notwithstanding which remonstrance, these productions still continued to be inserted in all subsequent editions of our author's poems till the time of Malone; nor was the fallacy detected till the year 1766, when it was pointed out by Dr. Farmer, in his very ingenious *Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare*. The order in which these little pieces stand in the old copy is not followed by Mr. Malone, who has classed all those which relate to *Adonis* together.]

I.

SWEET Cytherea, sitting by a brook,
With young Adonis, lovely, fresh, and green,
Did court the lad with many a lovely look:—
Such looks as none could look but beauty's queen.

She told him stories to delight his ear ;
She show'd him favors to allure his eye ;
To win his heart, she touch'd him here and there :
Touches so soft still conquer chastity.
But whether unripe years did want conceit,
Or he refused to take her figured proffer ;—
The tender nibbler would not touch the bait,
But smile and jest at every gentle offer :
Then fell she on her back, fair queen, and
toward :
He rose, and ran away ; ah, fool, too froward !

II.

Scarce had the sun dried up the dewy morn,
And scarce the herd gone to the hedge for shade,
When Cytherea, all in love forlorn,
A longing tarriance for Adonis made,
Under an osier growing by a brook ;—
A brook, where Adon used to cool his spleen.
Hot was the day ; she hotter, that did look
For his approach, that often there had been.
Anon he comes, and throws his mantle by,
And stood stark naked on the brook's greer
brim ;
'The sun look'd on the world with glorious eye,
Yet not so wistly as this queen on him.
He, spying her, bounced in, whereas he stood :
' O Love,' quoth she, ' why was not I a flood . '

III.

Fair was the morn, when the fair queen of love,¹

.

Paler for sorrow than her milk-white dove,
 For Adon's sake, a youngster proud and wild :
 Her stand she takes upon a steep-up hill.
 Anon Adonis comes with horn and hounds :
 She, silly queen, with more than love's good will.
 Forbad the boy he should not pass those grounds :
 ' Once,' quoth she, ' did I see a fair, sweet youth
 Here in these brakes deep-wounded with a boar,
 Deep in the thigh, a spectacle of ruth !
 See in my thigh,' quoth she, ' here was the sore.'
 She showed hers : he saw more wounds than
 one ;
 And blushing fled, and left her all alone.

IV.

Venus, with young Adonis sitting by her,
 Under a myrtle shade, began to woo him :
 She told the youngling how god Mars did try her,
 And as he fell to her, so fell she to him.
 ' Even thus,' quoth she, ' the warlike god embraced
 me !'
 And then she clipp'd Adonis in her arms :

¹ An intermediate line is here lost.

‘ Even thus,’ quoth she, ‘ the warlike god unlaced
me !’

As if the boy should use like loving charms :
‘ Even thus,’ quoth she, ‘ he seised on my lips !’
And with her lips on his did act the seisure :
And as she fetched breath, away he skips,
And would not take her meaning nor her pleasure.

Ah ! that I had my lady at this bay,
To kiss and clip me till I run away !

v.

Crabbed age and youth
Cannot live together :
Youth is full of pleasance.
Age is full of care ;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather ;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare :
Youth is full of sport,
Age’s breath is short ;
Youth is nimble, age is lame :
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold ;
Youth is wild, and age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee ;
Youth, I do adore thee :
O, my love, my love is young !

Age, I do defy thee :
O, sweet shepherd, hie thee ;
For, methinks, thou stay'st too long !

VI.

Sweet rose, fair flower, untimely pluck'd, soon
faded ;
Pluck'd in the bud, and faded in the spring !
Bright orient pearl, alack ! too timely shaded !
Fair creature, kill'd too soon by death's sharp
sting !
Like a green plum that hangs upon a tree.
And falls, through wind, before the fall should be.

I weep for thee, and yet no cause I have ;
For why ? thou left'st me nothing in thy will :
And yet thou left'st me more than I did crave ;
For why ? I craved nothing of thee still :
O, yes, dear friend ! I pardon crave of thee :
Thy discontent thou didst bequeathe to me.

VII.

Fair is my love, but not so fair as fickle ;
Mild as a dove, but neither true nor trusty ;
Brighter than glass, and yet, as glass is, brittle ;
Softer than wax, and yet, as iron, rusty :
A lily pale, with damask die to grace her ;
None fairer, nor none falser to deface her.

Her lips to mine how often hath she join'd,
Between each kiss her oaths of true love swearing !

How many tales to please me hath she coin'd,
Dreading my love, the loss thereof still fearing !
Yet, in the midst of all her pure protestings,
Her faith, her oaths, her tears, and all were
jestings.

She burn'd with love, as straw with fire flameth ;
She burn'd out love, as soon as straw outburneth ;
She framed the love, and yet she foil'd the framing ;
She bade love last, and yet she fell a turning.
Was this a lover, or a lecher whether ?
Bad in the best, though excellent in neither.

VIII.

Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye,¹
('Gainst whom the world cannot hold argument)
Persuade my heart to this false perjury ?
Vows, for thee broke, deserve not punishment.
A woman I forswore ; but, I will prove,
Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee :
My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love ;
Thy grace being gain'd, cures all disgrace in me.
My vow was breath, and breath a vapor is :
Then thou, fair sun, which on my earth dost shine,
Exhalest this vapor vow ; in thee it is :
If broken then, it is no fault of mine :

¹ This Sonnet appears in *Love's Labor's Lost*, vol. iii.
p. 273.

If by me broke, what fool is not so wise,
To break an oath, to win a paradise?

IX.

If love make me forsworn, how shall I swear to
love?¹

O, never faith could hold, if not to beauty vow'd!
Though to myself forsworn, to thee I'll constant
prove;

Those thoughts to me like oaks, to thee like osiers
bow'd.

Study his bias leaves, and makes his book thine
eyes,

Where all those pleasures live, that art can com-
prehend.

If knowlege be the mark, to know thee shall
suffice:

Well learned is that tongue, that well can thee
commend;

All ignorant that soul, that sees thee without
wonder;

(Which is to me some praise, that I thy parts
admire)

Thine eye Jove's lightning seems, thy voice his
dreadful thunder,

Which, not to anger bent, is music, and sweet fire.

¹ This Sonnet is found in *Love's Labor's Lost*, vol. iii.
p. 267.

Celestial as thou art, O, do not love that wrong.
To sing the heavens' praise with such an earthly
tongue.

X.

Beauty is but a vain and doubtful good ;
A shining gloss, that fadeth suddenly ;
A flower that dies, when first it 'gins to bud ;
A brittle glass, that 's broken presently :
A doubtful good, a gloss, a glass, a flower.
Lost, faded, broken, dead within an hour.

And as goods lost are seld or never found ;
As faded gloss no rubbing will refresh ;
As flowers dead lie wither'd on the ground ;
As broken glass no cement can redress ;—
So beauty, blemish'd once, for ever 's lost,
In spite of physic, painting, pain, and cost.

XI.

Good night, good rest. Ah ! neither be my share :
She bade good night, that kept my rest away ;
And daff'd me ¹ to a cabin hang'd with care,
To descant on the doubts of my decay.
' Farewell,' quoth she, ' and come again to-
morrow : '
Fare well I could not, for I supp'd with sorrow.

¹ Put me off.

Yet at my parting sweetly did she smile ;
In scorn or friendship, nill I ¹ construe whether :
'T may be, she joy'd to jest at my exile ;
'I' may be, again to make me wander thither :
 ' Wander ! '—a word for shadows like myself ;
 As take the pain, but cannot pluck the pelf.

XII.

Lord, how mine eyes throw gazes to the east !
My heart doth charge the watch ; the morning rise
Doth cite each moving sense from idle rest.
Not daring trust the office of mine eyes,
 While Philomela sits and sings, I sit and mark,
 And wish her lays were tuned like the lark ;

For she doth welcome daylight with her ditty,
And drives away dark, dismal-dreaming night :
The night so pack'd, I post unto my pretty :
Heart hath his hope, and eyes their wished sight ;
 Sorrow changed to solace, solace mix'd with
 sorrow ;
For why ? she sigh'd, and bade me come to-
 morrow.

Were I with her, the night would post too soon ;
But now are minutes added to the hours :
To spite me now, each minute seems a moon ;
Yet not for me, shine sun to succour flowers !

¹ I will not.

Pack night, peep day ; good day, of night now
borrow ;
Short, night, to-night, and length thyself to-
morrow.

XIII.

It was a lording's daughter, the fairest one of
three,
That liked of her master as well as well might be ;
Till looking on an Englishman, the fairest eye could
see,
Her fancy fell a turning.
Long was the combat doubtful, that love with love
did fight,
To leave the master loveless, or kill the gallant
knight :
To put in practice either, alas ! it was a spite
Unto the silly damsel.
But one must be refused, more mickle was the pain,
That nothing could be used, to turn them both to
gain ;
For of the two the trusty knight was wounded with
disdain :
Alas ! she could not help it.
Thus art with arms contending was victor of the
day.
Which by a gift of learning did bear the maid
away :
Then lullaby ; the learned man hath got the lady
gay ;
For now my song is ended.

XIV.

On a day, (alack the day!)¹
 Love, whose month was ever May,
 Spied a blossom, passing fair,
 Playing in the wanton air:
 Through the velvet leaves the wind,
 All unseen, 'gan passage find;
 That the lover, sick to death,
 Wish'd himself the heaven's breath.
 'Air,' quoth he, 'thy cheeks may blow;
 Air, would I might triumph so!
 But, alas! my hand hath sworn
 Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn:
 Vow, alack, for youth unmeet;
 Youth, so apt to pluck a sweet.
 Do not call it sin in me,
 That I am forsworn for thee:
 Thou, for whom Jove would swear
 Juno but an Ethiop were;
 And deny himself for Jove,
 Turning mortal for thy love.'

XV.

My flocks feed not,
 My ewes breed not,

¹ This Sonnet occurs also in *Love's Labor's Lost*, vol. 1 p. 275.

My ram's speed not ;

All is amiss :

Love's denying,

Faith's defying,

Heart's renying,¹

Causer of this.

All my merry jigs are quite forgot ;

All my lady's love is lost, God wot :

Where her faith was firmly fix'd in love,

There a nay is placed without remove.

One silly cross

Wrought all my loss :

O frowning Fortune, cursed, fickle dame .

For now I see,

Inconstancy

More in women than in men remain.

In black mourn I ;

All fears scorn I ;

Love hath forlorn me,

Living in thrall :

Heart is bleeding,

All help needing,

(O cruel speeding !)

Fraughted with gall.

My shepherd's pipe can sound no deal :²

My wether's bell rings doleful knell ;

¹ Renouncing : from the French word *renier*.

² In no degree.

My curtail dog, that wont to have play'd,
Plays not at all, but seems afraid :
My sighs so deep,
Procure¹ to weep,
 In howling-wise, to see my doleful plight.
How sighs resound
Through harkless ground,
 Like a thousand vanquish'd men in bloody fight'.

Clear wells spring not ;
Sweet birds sing not ;
Loud bells ring not
 Cheerfully :

Herds stand weeping,
Flocks all sleeping,
Nymphs back creeping
 Fearfully.

All our pleasure known to us poor swains,
All our merry meetings on the plains,
All our evening sport from us is fled ;
All our love is lost, for love is dead.
Farewell, sweet lass ;

Thy like ne'er was

 For a sweet content, the cause of all my
 moan :

Poor Coridon

Must live alone :

 Other help for him I see that there is none.

¹ ' Him,' or ' the dog.' must here be understood.

XVI.

Whenas thine eye hath chose the dame.
And stall'd the deer that thou wouldst strike.
Let reason rule things worthy blame.
As well as fancy,¹ partial tike.
Take counsel of some wiser head,
Neither too young, nor yet unwed :

And when thou comest thy tale to tell,
Smoothe not thy tongue with filed talk,
Lest she some subtle practice smell ;
(A cripple soon can find a halt)
But plainly say thou lovest her well,
And set thy person forth to sell :

And to her will frame all thy ways :
Spare not to spend, and chiefly there,
Where thy desert may merit praise,
By ringing always in her ear.
The strongest castle, tower, and town,—
The golden bullet beats it down.

Serve always with assured trust :
And in thy suit be humble, true :
Unless thy lady prove unjust,
Press never thou to choose anew.

¹ Love.

When time shall serve, be thou not slack
To proffer, though she put thee back.

What though her frowning brows be bent,
Her cloudy looks will clear ere night;
And then too late she will repent,
That she dissembled her delight;
And twice desire, ere it be day,
That with such scorn she put away.

What though she strive to try her strength,
And ban, and brawl, and say thee nay;—
Her feeble force will yield at length,
When craft hath taught her thus to say:—
‘ Had women been so strong as men.
In faith, you had not had it then.

The wiles and guiles that women work,
Dissembled with an outward show,
The tricks and toys that in them lurk,
The cock that treads them shall not know.
Have you not heard it said full oft,
A woman’s nay doth stand for naught?

Think, women love to match with men,
And not to live so like a saint:
Here is no heaven; they holy then
Begin, when age doth them attain.
Were kisses all the joys in bed,
One woman would another wed.

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